CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

OREGON ASSOCIATION OF
Est
1983
MUNICIPAL RECORDERS

Revised 2005

Records Management Committee

> **"A government's records are important resources both to the government that creates them and to the citizens it serves. Records contain the information that keeps government functioning. They document the origin, evolution and operation of its programs. They reveal how government operated, how it responded to needs and how it served its citizens."**
>
> *Program Reporting Guidelines,* 1989, National Association of Government Archivists and Records Administration (NAGARA)

Oregon Association of Municipal Recorders

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Introduction

This publication was originally prepared by the Oregon Association of Municipal Recorders (OAMR) Manual Committee and members of the State Archives staff in 1990-91, updated in 1998-99 and further updated in 2004-05 by the OAMR Records Management Committee and staff from the State Archives Division.

The Manual is divided into chapters including filing systems, forms management, records storage, records disposition, electronic records, microfilm, and disaster planning. It is intended to provide you with basic guidelines on forming and implementing a records management program in your city.

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CHAPTER 1

PUBLIC RECORDS

Records Generally

Does your office comply with Oregon's Public Records law when receiving records requests from citizens, courts and other interested persons?

The State Department of Justice has published a manual entitled, "*Attorney General's Public Records and Meetings Manual.*" This manual is an opinion of the Attorney General interpreting legislation pertaining to records and provides general legal advice. To purchase, contact: Department of Justice, Publications Center, 100 Justice building, 1162 Court Street NE, Salem, OR 97310, (503)378-2992, ext. 325.

This manual covers the following questions related to Public Records:

A. Who Has the Right to Inspect Public Records?
B. Who is Subject to the Public Records Law?
C. What Records Are Covered by the Law?
D. How Can a Person Inspect or Obtain Public Records?
    1. Records Custodian
    2. Proper and Reasonable Opportunity to Inspect
    3. Copying
    4. Public Body Prerogatives
        a. Protective Rules
        b. Fees
        c. Consultation with Legal Counsel
        d. Destruction of Public Records
E. What Public Records Are Exempt from Disclosure?
F. May a Public Body Voluntarily Disclose an Exempt Record to Selected Persons Without Waiving Exemption Generally?
G. Where and How Does a Person Proceed if Access Is Refused?

Subpoenaed Records

Whenever an employee is served with a subpoena requiring that the employee appear in court with any public record, the employee should immediately contact his/her legal counsel. In addition, any destruction of records should stop, even if the destruction is in the normal course of business.

Certifying Documents

From time to time, members of the public request photocopies and/or certified copies of records pursuant to ORS 192.430 and 192.440.

If the “record copy” is in the custody of department other than the office of the City Recorder, the custodian of the record must sign before the City Recorder (similar to a notary) who will attest and affix the city seal. The City Recorder will certify documents maintained in the recorder’s office. Sample forms are contained in Appendix E for your reproduction. Some cities use a self-inking stamp stating “Certified to be a true and correct copy of the original record” with a line for the City Recorder’s signature and name of city rather than the sample certificates.

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CHAPTER 2

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Program Goal

To establish an efficient and economic records program wherein records can be created, maintained, retrieved, and disposed of easily and wherein costs can be reduced or kept to a minimum for the program.

Objectives

- To save valuable office space by systematically removing semi-active records and duplicate records that are not the official record.

- To save money by providing low-cost storage and by controlling equipment purchased.

- Identify and protect vital records, which are records that would be required to continue or re-establish a city's operation following a disaster, and systematically identify the record copy.

- To save time in man-hours by developing an orderly system for maintaining retrieving, storing, and disposing of records including the psychological savings that comes from using an efficient system.

Policies

- Store only active records in valuable office space.

- Move semi-active records to low-cost storage.

- Preserve valuable historical or archival records under adequate conditions.

- All valueless records shall be destroyed after meeting the minimum retention and shall be retained longer only under special circumstances.

- All public records, including those stored on electronic media, shall be accessible to the public, unless exemption status is obtained.

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CHAPTER 3

CITY RECORDS MANAGERS

Administrative Rule (OAR 166-30-016)

To establish a records management program to insure orderly retention and destruction of all public records and to insure the preservation of public records of value, each state or local agency should designate a records officer to organize and coordinate records scheduling, retirement, storage, and destruction.

City Records Manager/Archivist

- Keeps updated on current records laws;
- Maintains, monitors, and updates the city's records retention schedule through coordination with the state archivist and department supervisors;
- Reviews requests for new records equipment and assists departments with storage facilities;
- Keeps updated on current records management procedures and informs and educates departments on innovations and new procedures;
- Develops systems for indexing historical records and assists departments with their systems;
- Assists departments in the orderly disposition, including the destruction of records as authorized by the records retention schedule;
- Keeps updated on the most efficient and economic means of destroying records;
- Coordinates the microfilm program to insure proper records retention;
- Assists in approving storage locations for the storage of inactive and archival records; and
- Develops a records disaster plan.

Department Records Supervisors

Department directors should designate one staff position as the department records supervisor. This person may be a supervisor or clerical person with substantial knowledge of the operation and the records in their department.

The records supervisor should:

- Administer the policies and procedures of the city records management manual and any department records procedures;

- Supervise the disposition of records, including destruction of records meeting the minimum retention periods and the transferring of semi-active records to “low-cost” storage. Destruction should only be carried out with the approval of the records officer/city recorder and department head;
- Assist in establishing and maintaining filing systems, standards, and procedures for record keeping; and
- Serve as liaison between the department and the records officer.

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CHAPTER 4

STARTING A RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Initial Steps In Starting A Records Management Program

1. Have the city manager or council appoint a records officer who will be responsible for scheduling, retention and destruction of records. Your city charter may specify the City Recorder/Clerk as the Records Manager. Notify the State Archivist of the appointment for your agency.

   > “To establish a records management program to insure orderly retention and destruction of all public records, and to insure the preservation of public records of value, each state or local agency should designate a Records Officer to organize and coordinate records scheduling, retirement, storage and destruction….” OAR 166-30-016

2. Analyze storage needs and other capabilities
   - Is there adequate storage for inactive records awaiting destruction?
   - Is there adequate and suitable storage for “permanent” records?
   - Is microfilming the answer?
   - Do you have sufficient funds for a storage facility/records center?
   - Have you considered a grant? Grants can be developed to assist in data entry, systems design, inventories, and preservation. Information on available grants can be found on the Internet.

3. Inventory to Final Disposition
   This process can be accomplished through a committee, by an individual assigned in each department, or by the records officer.

   a. Using a copy of the current City General Records Retention Schedule, identify records according to the schedule and mark the records with the series title and/or number. See “Glossary” for definition of a series. Label the record series, file cabinets, and boxes.

      > “Unless otherwise stated, a retention period is calculated from the date the public record was created.” ORS 166-30-027(2)

> "No public records of fiscal transactions shall be destroyed, even though the required minimum retention period has passed until after the required audit for the period covered by the public records has been completed and the auditor has released the public records for destruction."
> OAR 166-309-041

b. Separate permanent and non-permanent records. This is a good practice when preparing new files. See "Filing Systems".

c. Once you have identified your records, you may either store them as "inactive" records, or destroy them using the current City General Records Retention Schedule. See "Records Storage and Records Destruction."

4. Records not identifiable in the General Schedule
If you are unable to match records with those listed in this schedule, scan surrounding record series titles and descriptions in the most likely section for more clues. Use a records series which matches most closely within reasonable limits. If the city records appear to be a combination of two or more record series in the schedule, use the listing with the longest retention period. Consult the city records officer (usually the city recorder) or the city attorney for assistance. If city records cannot be reasonably interpreted to match any series in this schedule, contact the State Archives for appraisal assistance or information on limited special scheduling.

Need Assistance?

OAMR website – Records Management Committee: www.oamr.org

Oregon Secretary of State website: www.sos.state.or.us

So, Where Do You Start?

Before a records management program can be initiated, it must be presented to management and "sold" as an asset that will help the organization meet its goals.

A goods records management program:
- Saves manpower
- Saves office space
- Saves money

Step 1. Accumulate Information

Acquire the professional training needed to understand records management. Study the chapters in this manual, state statutes pertaining to records, your city code and charter, and records management textbooks. Attend professional seminars on records issues. As you attend classes and read information, collect ideas for your presentations to management, and keep a file of ideas.

Determine your city's needs. What elements are needed? What are the expenses and limitations? How much manpower will be required to support the program? Do certain departments have special problems unique issues?

Visit each department, talk with records personnel, and view the records. Explain your plan to the staff members who will assist you.

Armed with your understanding of retention schedules, record processing procedures, records and organization charts, you can inventory the files, micrographics, data processing equipment, and record storage/retrieval equipment.

Collect information about:

- Volume of existing records
- Records storage/retrieval equipment and storage containers
- Commercial microfilming services, including computer output microfilm (COM) service
- Clerical, professional/technical and managerial labor
- Electronic media

Step 2. Developing Goals And Objectives

Sell practical ideas that will help your city reach its objectives. Develop a clear job description and/or work plan citing some steps you plan to take and goals you hope to achieve. (See *Records Manager*)

Consider:

- Why is the program needed in your city?
- Are your goals realistic and reasonable?
- Do your objectives and goals support the objectives and the goals of your city?

What elements of a records management program already exist? For instance, you may recommend updating your present program using this manual and the proposed policies and samples.

Step 3. Benefits

Some cost justifications are entirely valid. As recommended in this manual, you may want to establish policies against the purchase of additional filing equipment just to store files that a records retention schedule has designated for destruction. As another example, an entire file cabinet may be eligible for destruction, and once the files and the cabinet are removed, valuable floor space could be put to a more productive use.

Some benefits of a records management program:

- An established records management program lends credibility to your city's maintenance of the public record. This will be useful when your office is subpoenaed during court proceedings.
- A records disaster and recovery program avoids allegations of neglect in the event of a disaster which could lead to litigation or denial of an insurance claim.
- Once identified, vital records would be protected from loss and the organization could recover quickly in the event of a disaster.
- Savings could be realized by identifying and destroying duplicate documents.
- An efficient records management program could reduce your office's personnel needs.

Step 4. Developing The Draft Plan

Now it is time to assemble your program plan and develop staff assignments and schedules that you will propose to top management. Keep the plan realistic and within reasonable time limits. Determine which personnel will work full time in the records management program, which will work part time, and which will assist.

When preparing your plan, try to think about how management views records management (primarily from a financial perspective). Also, consider preparing more than one plan based on budgets and time availability. Include awards and fun events like "appreciation ceremonies" or a "records destruction day" with contests and prizes to make the program enjoyable and rewarding. Keep track of the people who help and reward them. You will have more support and enthusiasm for the program if you reward those involved. Acknowledge creative issues of everyone involved. Notify the local media. Consider starting an in-house newsletter to provide personnel with updated records management information and education.

Step 5. Presenting Recommendations to Top Management

Give your presentation to top management, but provide a written report with a comprehensive, detailed picture for review later. A live presentation is more readily absorbed and provides a forum for discussion.

Invite members of top management and anyone else who maybe involved in the program to attend the presentation. Distribute the report several days prior to the presentation date to provide sufficient time for study and formulation of questions. You may even want to request the questions in writing in advance.

SUMMARY

- Accumulate information and obtain professional training.
- Develop reasonable goals and objectives, an overall records program, or program enhancements.

- Identify tangible and intangible benefits.
- Develop a draft plan that identifies personnel requirements and a schedule for implementing the recommendations.
- Present the program live to top management outlining the plan along with expected goals and benefits.
- Ask for support, discuss it, and once obtained, use it to convince personnel of the importance of the program, its goals and policies.

Once you get your program successfully established, continue to sell the concept and possibilities of records management in your city.

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CHAPTER 5

LIFE-CYCLE OF RECORDS

Creation

Whenever you create information related to public business, you are creating a public record. Public records are the heart of government operations. These records:

- Are created for the citizens,
- Are the property of the citizens,
- Are protected in the interest of citizens,
- Are an historical record of how the government served the needs of the citizens, and
- Are historical, legal, administrative or fiscal records.

Active Use

Records in active use are stored in areas where you actively refer to the record, also known as “high-cost storage” areas. These records are usually no older than two years.

Semi-active

Records in this phase are needed less frequently, but need to be retained until the legal minimum retention has been met. These semi-active records are usually stored in “low-cost storage” areas that meet special storage conditions. These records are usually referred to only once a month.

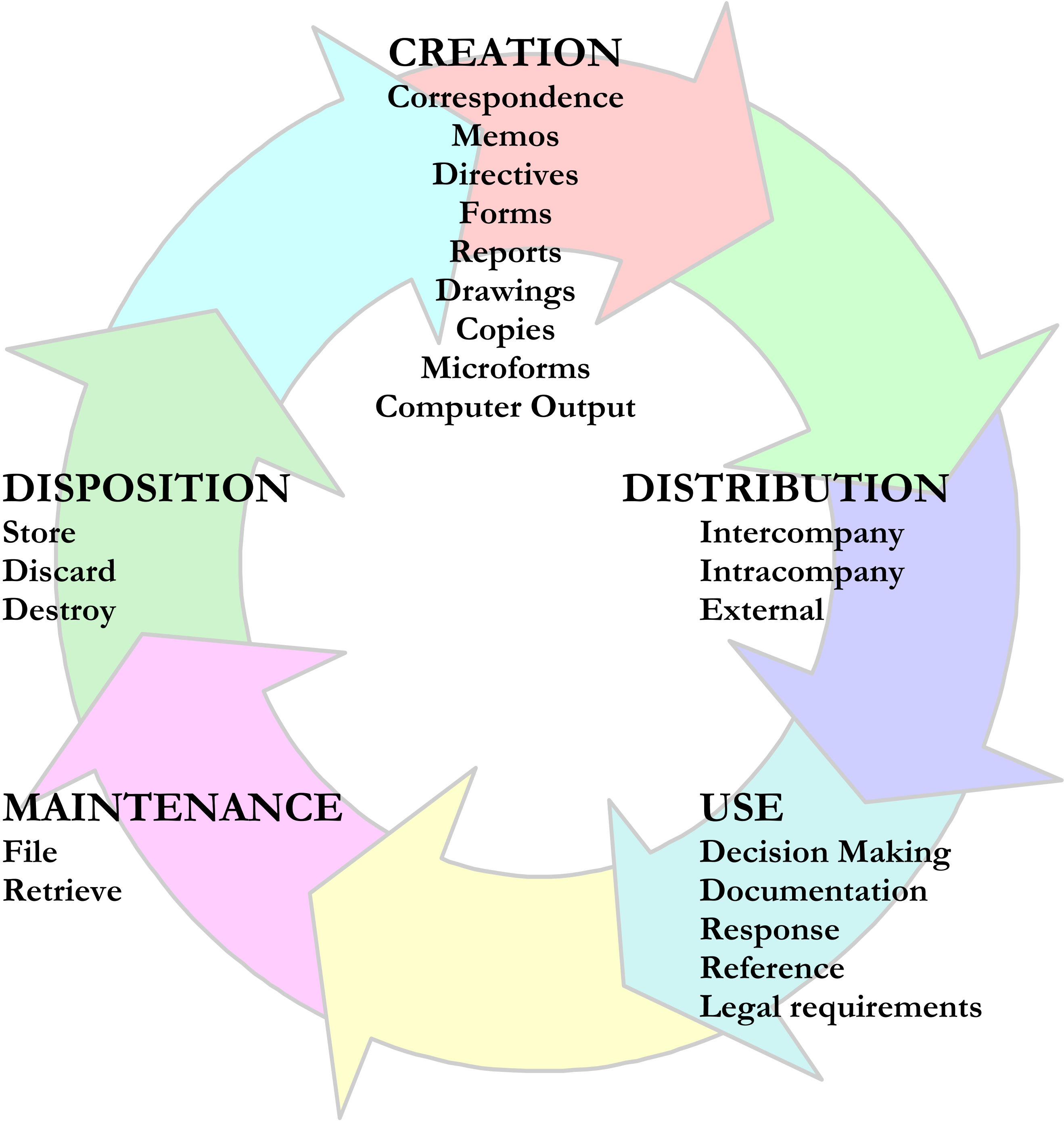
When semi-active records are separated from active records, the staff becomes more efficient in maintaining and accessing the more valuable, active records.

Final Disposition

Once a record has served its purpose for the operation of the office, the record is ready for final disposition.

Some records are destroyed after meeting the authorized minimum retention. Other records are retained indefinitely (as permanent documents) when they have historical value, or archival value with far-reaching administrative needs. Records retained indefinitely should be stored under special storage conditions.

LIFE CYCLE OF A RECORD



CREATION
Correspondence
Memos
Directives
Forms
Reports
Drawings
Copies
Microforms
Computer Output

DISTRIBUTION
Intercompany
Intracompany
External

USE
Decision Making
Documentation
Response
Reference
Legal requirements

MAINTENANCE
File
Retrieve

DISPOSITION
Store
Discard
Destroy

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CHAPTER 6

RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

Why create records retention schedules?
Oregon state and local governments produce a staggering amount and variety of records. Some of these records need to be kept long-term for legal, fiscal, administrative, or historical reasons. Others may be disposed of relatively quickly after their usefulness has expired. A government's records are an important resource both to the agency and the general public, and must be managed with the same care, concern, and skill as any other key asset.

What are records retention schedules?
Records retention schedules are lists and descriptions of public records. They include information about how long each type of records should be kept (retention period) and what should happen to it at the end of that period (disposition). Records retention schedules cover records in all formats, including but not limited to paper, microfilm, and electronic media.

What is a general records schedule?
A general records schedule applies to an entire group of state or local government entities. Thus, a city general records schedule applies to the records of all cities in Oregon. The only exception is if a valid "special schedule" exists for a particular state or local government entity or an office or record within that entity. In these cases, special schedules override the requirements of a general schedule.

The City General Records Retention Schedule can be found at
<http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/rules/OARS_100/OAR_166/166_200.html>

What is a special records schedule?
A special records schedule is written for each state agency to describe in detail the history, programs, and records of the agency. Special schedules set the retention requirements for the unique program records created by each state agency. They do not include routine administrative and financial records. Instead, these are covered in the state agency general schedule. By describing agency programs in an easy to understand format, the special schedules are designed help citizens better navigate state government. In certain cases, limited special schedules are created for local governments. Each special schedule expires five years after its creation.

For Further Information

If you have a records retention schedule question that is not addressed above, please contact the records officer for the appropriate agency for specific questions related to a particular records retention schedule. The city recorder is typically designated as the records officer.

For further information, refer to the Records Retention Schedules Frequently Asked Questions at <http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/recmgmt/defaultrecmgmt.html>

Contact the Oregon State Archives for general questions about records retention schedules or to create a records retention schedule for your office.

Mary Beth Herkert, Records Management Unit Supervisor
Oregon State Archives
800 Summer Street NE
Salem, OR 97310
(503) 373-0701 ext. 246
mary.e.herkert@state.or.us

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CHAPTER 7

FILING SYSTEMS

Selecting a Filing System

Records management is intended to control recorded information from its creation until its disposition. The ability to file and retrieve information easily and effectively is central to this process. The correct type of filing system is largely dependent on the characteristics of the records involved. All filing systems have advantages and disadvantages. This chapter offers guidelines and recommendations for the selection and use of different types of filing systems. Although records come in all formats – paper, microfilm, audio-visual, and electronic media – this chapter will focus on paper based filing systems.

What System Is Right For Your Office?

Before setting up a particular filing system, ask yourself some questions to help evaluate what types of records you have and what your needs are:

- How are the records used and retrieved? How would I go about retrieving a record? Types of records and the usual method of retrieval will help determine a filing system. For example, a numeric system would work well for purchase orders retrieved by number. An alphabetic system would make more sense for business license files retrieved by business name.
- How many records are created; are storage needs large or small?
- What will the storage equipment and supply needs be?
- What type of index should be used? How should cross referencing be handled?
- Is the system logical? Logic speeds learning, so staff members do not have to rely on memory alone. The method behind the system should be clear and reasonable.
- Is the system practical? Does it do what you want it to do? Avoid academic and overly complex classifications; the system should be designed to use common terms known to all users of the system.
- Is the system simple? Simple here means easy to learn. The system should be as straightforward as possible, with little (or preferably no) room for interpretation.
- Is the system functional? Does it relate to the function of the records it addresses? Classification terms should reflect the function of the records regardless of their operational location.
- Is the system retention-conscious? Your filing system should be linked to your records retention schedule in a way that allows you to remove records from active to

inactive storage, and to destroy those with expired retention periods. These activities should be done according to your government's approved records control schedule. The efficiency and practicality of a filing system should not be sacrificed to retention considerations, however.

- Is the system expandable? Additional or different classifications might be needed in the future or your office may experience unforeseen growth. Your filing system should be able to accommodate growth as well.
- Is the system standardized? Using different terms to describe the same record or subject will cause confusion. In order to avoid lost files, misfiles and unnecessary duplication of records and filing locations, you should have a written set of rules for all filing personnel to follow.

Types Of Filing Systems

A filing system is a method of organizing records by placing them in predetermined locations according to an overall plan of classification. There are five basic types of filing systems: *alphabetic, numeric, chronological, geographic*, and *subject*. With the exception of chronological, each of these systems uses alphabetic concepts in its operation. *Alphanumeric* is a common combination using letters and numbers.

The following procedures for records storage are common to all systems;

1. Inspecting a record means to confirm its readiness to be filed. A release mark from the person receiving the record shows that the record is ready to be stored.

2. Indexing means choosing the filing segments (or name) under which a document is to be stored.

3. Coding is the actual marking of the record to identify its placement in storage. Coding is a physical act, as contrasted to indexing, which is a mental determination. Examples would be to highlight or underline a name or write the file name or number on the top of the page.

4. Cross-reference the record if it could be requested by a name other than the one selected for coding, only if necessary.

5. Sorting places the documents in correct sequence before storing. Prepare the document for storage by removing paper clips and rubber bands, stapling related papers, mending torn records, and flattening any folded records. Remove papers from three-ring binders.

6. Storing is the actual placing of the records in file folders and containers.

Alphabetic Systems

Alphabetic storage arranges all material in dictionary (A through Z) order. Following each letter of the alphabet, there are individual folders containing records that have accumulated regarding a designated entity or activity and one general folder containing information for entities/activities with a very low volume of records.

Advantages:

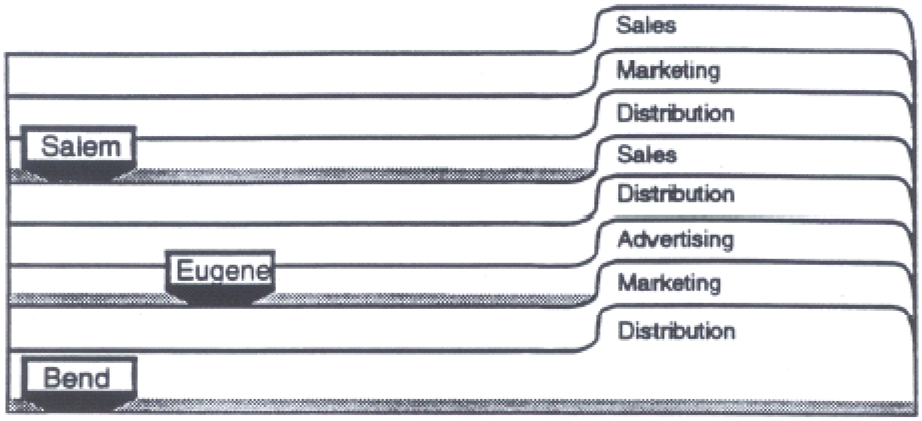
- A-Z order is familiar
- Misfiles are easily checked
- Less costly than other filing methods
- Only one sorting is needed

Disadvantages:

- Frequent misfilings where no standard rules are followed
- Similar names are confusing
- Easy to make transposition errors
- Labels can be time-consuming to prepare if complete information is used (i.e. United States Government Federal Bureau of Investigations)

ANSI/ARMA International has prepared an excellent handbook entitled *Alphabetic Filing Rules*. This handbook provides standards to insure consistency in filing thus making retrieval easier. The book may be purchased from Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA) International (see contact address in Appendix A).

Figure 1: Alphabetic Classification, Geographic System



Subject Systems

Subject files are used when the content of the record is more important than the names of the individual or organization whose records are being stored. The files are in alphabetic arrangement according to the subject. Within the subject folder, records are arranged alphabetically by correspondent's name or chronologically.

To efficiently function, a master and relative index are needed. The master index alphabetically lists all subjects in the system. The relative index, or cross reference, lists all headings and subdivision and all possible variations of those headings.

A brief explanation of the records stored in each subject folder would be helpful for new personnel (i.e. for the file "Budget" records include the City Recorder's proposed budget, copy of publication notice or affidavits, copies of related resolutions and ordinances, and related correspondence).

The standard arrangements for subject storage are straight dictionary or encyclopedic. In straight dictionary arrangement, the subject folders are arranged behind A to Z guides in their correct alphabetic order according to subject title. In encyclopedic arrangement the subjects are subdivided so that several folders contain small portions of the records pertaining to one main subject.

The Dictionary arrangement is appropriate for small systems; however, as the system begins to grow it might need to be changed to an encyclopedic system. Larger systems are subdivided in secondary and tertiary categories. This increases the system's flexibility; entire sections can be added or removed without destroying the system's appearance or usability. It also limits the number of files to search through by keeping related records together.

Advantages:

- Documents can be grouped by topic
- New subjects can be added easily for expansion of files
- Statistical information can be easily gathered (i.e. "Office Supplies" How many envelopes were ordered?)

Disadvantages:

- Overlapping subjects and similarity of terms can cause confusion (*real property* or *land*)
- Selecting topics can be difficult and time consuming, and therefore expensive
- New personnel frequently have difficulty using subject storage efficiently
- Lack of indexing can delay retrieval
- Retrieval by names of persons or agencies or be locations is very difficult

Numeric Systems

Numeric filing systems arrange files by numbers or by dates. Records are assigned numbers and then stored in a sequence. It is useful where confidentiality is a concern and where many people have access to the records. A numeric file consists of the file; an index, in the alphabetic form; and an accession book, which serves as a consecutive record of assigned numbers.

Straight numeric systems simply number files consecutively and arrange them in sequence. Straight numeric systems are simple to use, manage, and expand.

Duplex numeric systems consist of two or more number segments used to classify numeric codes assigned to files. Files are arranged numerically based on combinations of these segments. Duplex systems are usually used for large volumes of records. They allow high activity files to be evenly distributed throughout the records and support the assignment of blocks of files to individuals for filing and retrieving.

Consecutive numbering (10-20-30; 100-200-300; 1010-1020-1030; etc.) is the easiest to understand method of numeric storage as it uses numbers arranged in sequence from left to right.

Advantages:

- Re-filing is rapid – numeric sequence is familiar
- Expansion is easy and unlimited
- Transfer of old records is less complicated
- Cross-reference is simpler
- Folders can be labeled in advance of their use
- Misfiles are easier to spot than in alphabetic file

Disadvantages:

- Indirect method of locating file
- Higher material cost
- Alphabetic file must be meticulously maintained
- Large numbers more difficult to work with, transposition of numbers easy to do
- High activity folders are usually located at the end of the system, congesting the filing and retrieval of high-activity files
- Difficult to assign blocks of files to individuals for filing or retrieving
- Difficult to handle miscellaneous records

Nonconsecutive numbering is a system of numbering that uses numbers in random order. The groups of digits (23-34-45) are identified as tertiary, secondary, and terminal reading from left to right.

Terminal digit filing is sorted by reading in groups (46-29-37) from right to left instead of from left to right.

Advantages:

- Color coding easy to use with this method; sorting can be done by color
- Overcomes problem of congestion in working area
- Fewer errors in number transposition because numbers are divided into small groups
- Training is easier

Disadvantages:

- Staff may feel fearful that it is too complex
- Takes time to learn to read from right to left
- If not color coded, misfiles can be hard to find
- If a large block of numbers needs to be retrieved, filer must go to several locations.

Middle digit filing is sorting by also reading in groups (23-32-45) except the filer reads the middle number first, then the left number, then the right number.

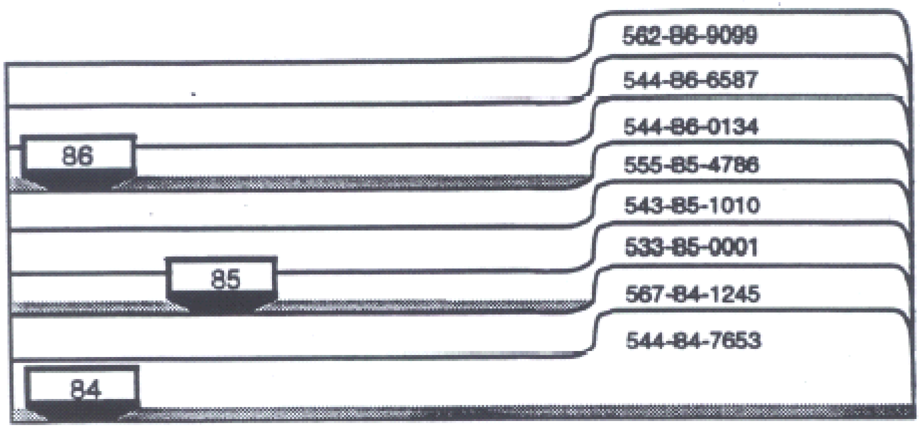
Advantages:

- Conversion from a consecutive numbering system is easier than converting to a terminal digit system.
- Color coding can improve filing efficiency

Disadvantages:

- May be confusing

Figure 2: Numeric Classification, Middle Digit Duplex System



Other methods of nonconsecutive numbering systems include “Skip Numbering”, “Block Codes”, and “Group Coding.”

Decimal systems use ten general divisions, which can be subdivided by groups of ten. The Dewey Decimal System, used in 90 percent of the world’s libraries, is the most famous example.

Advantages:

- Unlimited expansion
- Groups similar subjects

Disadvantages:

- Limited to ten general classification areas

Geographic storage is often used when reference is made first to a place or location instead of a name. An alphabetic file system for individual names is important to locate records if a request is made by a name rather than an address. It is organized according to either the location name guide plan or the lettered guide plan.

The location name guide plan bases storage on location names (counties, states, countries, cities) as the filing segments that comprise the main division. The lettered guide plan uses guides printed with alphabetic letters – sometimes with letters and numbers – in addition to guides with location names printed on them. It is not often used because of its cluttered appearance. This method works well for utility purposes and for documents (agreements, liens, and easements) related to specific properties.

Chronological storage is filing by calendar date. It is used within each of the other filing methods to reorganize records in individual file folders.

Establishing the Files:

- Prepare a “filing procedures manual” that is easy to follow and review it periodically. The rules and procedures developed should be standardized and followed by everyone who uses the system. Standard filing rules and examples can be found in *Alphabetic Filing Rules*, published by ARMA International.
- Your rules should include: creation of a folder, labeling and color coding, how to use guides, correct alphabetic filing order, indexing, charge-out and follow-up procedures of borrowed files, cross-referencing, transfers, how to repair records, and how to store records.
- Allow about 3”- 4” of open space in each file drawer. When file drawers are “tight”, filing and retrieval time increases.
- File drawers should have between 5 and – 20 file guides. If there are more than twenty, personnel will spend too much time filing and retrieving.
- File folder tabs and labels should be consistent and not a mixture of different styles. Labels should be typed in an established format and not handwritten.

- When a new file folder is prepared, the file label could include the file date, identification of the "Record Series Title" and the "Minimum retention" as approved by the State Archivist.
- Folders are manageable up to a thickness of ¾ inches. If they are thicker, the file may obscure the label. Consider a large "accordion" file for files thicker than ¾ inches.
- Out indicators (for guides, folders and sheets) are to be used to show location of borrowed records.
- Keep record series together. Keep "permanent" documents separate from "temporary" documents for easy disposition. (i.e. put permanent records on the right side of the folder and temporary records on the left.)
- The standard size for documents should be 8 ½" x 11". Maps, charts, and other oversized records that would be unreadable at the standard size are excluded from this requirement.
- Documents created by thermal "fax" machines should be photocopied if the document is to be retained for more than 15 to 20 days. The thermal "fax" documents begin fading in that time period
- The transfer of records from active storage to inactive storage to final disposition (archival storage or destruction) should be continual or on a periodic basis.
- Transferred records must be appropriately indexed and stored for later retrieval.

Getting Started

Work with the most current records, first. Do not try to take on too much at a time. The less current records can be done at a later date. Proceed to implement the system you have chosen and document the filing and indexing procedures for all to follow. Do not forget to be flexible – periodically evaluate the system to determine if revisions are necessary.

Oregon State Archives
Records Management Training

One File Cabinet Maintenance Costs

Staff Member Salary and Benefits	$1,912.50
Floor Space	$ 104.00
Supplies	$ 55.00
5-Drawer Cabinet	$ 27.50
Total Annual Cost	**$2,099.00**

Filing Dynamics

A change in methods results in an additional 4,500 filing inches, or 90% more filing in the same amount of floor space:

In a room 21 feet x 18 feet (378 square feet)
50 four-drawer cabinets = 5,000 filing inches
34 units of hanging box files = 9,500 clear filing inches

CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

CHAPTER 8

FORMS MANAGEMENT

Forms are necessary when information will be repeatedly supplied. A form with completed information is a public record.

Here are some guidelines for developing and using forms:

1. Create a form when there is a real need for standardization of information over a significant period of time.

2. When designing a form:
    - Consider the nature of the information, potential use, and need;
    - Keep the form simple, easy to read and easy to use; and,
    - Use a standard size and format, and provide a title and form number.

3. Provide easy and clear instructions.

4. Every time you create a new form, you may be creating a new record series; or vice versa, if you no longer use the form. Therefore, carefully consider the development and destruction of forms.

5. Save forms in a single location on your computer, such as in a shared folder or internal website. Electronic versions of your forms could include timesheets, business license applications, public records request forms, etc.

In addition, the book entitled *Records Management: A Practical Guide for Cities and Counties*, by ICMA (International City/County Management Association) contains a chapter on Forms Analysis, Design, and Control. This chapter contains excellent suggestions and recommendations on how to institute a forms management program, analyzing forms you currently use, how to develop user friendly forms, costs and tips on consolidating forms.

CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

CHAPTER 9

RECORDS STORAGE

Protection, accessibility, and security are the keys to operating a successful inactive records storage program.

Most records will become inactive before their retention period has expired. It is extremely costly and inefficient to maintain inactive records in filing cabinets in the office areas. An important part of any records management program is the proper storage of inactive records and the prompt destruction of records at the expiration of their required retention period. These guidelines should help you to establish an effective inactive records storage and destruction program.

Preparing Records For Storage

- Prepare the records one series at a time. *Never put more than one records series in a box!*
- Identify the records using the records retention schedule. Consider the physical volume, or annual accumulation. Is inactive storage required or valuable?
- Should the records be transferred off-site annually, semi-annually, quarterly, or monthly?
- Do you need regular access to one month's worth of these records? Six months' worth? More?
- What is the activity level of older records?
- Once you develop such a routine, make it a part of your standard operating procedures. This will ensure continuity in your inactive records storage program.
- Identity every individual record or file. Be consistent.
- Can you remove the file folder from the "permanent" records to avoid damage to the paper documents by the acidic folders?
- Prepare your records for storage in the same order that the records were stored in "active" office use. (Exception: Terminal Digit Systems)
- One of the best ways to prepare your files is at the time the file is active. Remove unnecessary duplicates; arrange all files in a consistent order for the record series. Separate permanent from non-permanent records. If they both have to be in the file, put permanent on one side of the folder and non-permanent on the other.

Storage Containers

If you choose to store and manage your inactive records in your own agency, you can ensure the security and accessibility or retrievability of your records by following a few very basic guidelines and using plain common sense.

- An archive carton should accommodate both letter- and legal-sized documents. Each carton holds approximately one cubic foot of records. Generally speaking, two of these cartons will hold the contents of one legal-sized file drawer, and three cartons will hold the contents of two letter-sized file drawers. When the carton is filled, it will weigh between 30 and 50 pounds.
- Sources for these cartons, also often called "bankers boxes" are office supply companies (i.e., Boise Cascade Office Products). Gaylord Archival is a catalog source for acid-free storage materials and conservation supplies, 1-800-448-6160.
- Permanent records should be stored in non-acidic cartons and file folders.
- Avoid over-stuffing the records carton. A minimum of 1.5 inches of free space must be allowed in each carton. Remove records from 3-ring binders.
- All files in the carton should face the same direction and each record should be easily identifiable. Note: You may consider not filing "permanent" documents in their acidic file folders. If you do store permanent documents in file folders, use non-acidic folders when establishing the files.
- Label your carton with the following information for easy identification:
  - ⇒ City Name/Department
  - ⇒ Records Series Title
  - ⇒ First and last file identifier
  - ⇒ Date of Creation and Date for Destruction
  - ⇒ Box Number Within That Group of Records

A sample box label is provided in Appendix E.

- Always store your records in closed containers. This will decrease the exposure of the paper to airborne dust and humidity.
- Never leave cartons of records on the floor. This will decrease possible damage in case of minor flooding or spillage. It will also diminish the possibility of boxes of records being misplaced or moved to an unassigned location.
- Do not store records directly under water-bearing pipes.
- Store records in an area that can be secured against intrusion by unauthorized personnel. A specific person or persons should be assigned to the maintenance of inactive storage and all access to those records should be coordinated through that person or persons.
- A reliable method of tracking activity and/or location of individual files should be developed so that inactive files retrieved for use will not become lost or misplaced. This can be as simple as the use of completed "out" cards or the creation of a complete database (Excel, Munimetrix) to track location of individual files removed from the storage box.

- Permanent files should be copied for the requestor, so the original is not removed from the storage room or vault.
- Never stack more than two boxes on top of each other for extended periods of time. Stacking not only makes retrieval difficult, but it can also lead to the collapse of the cartons and subsequent damage to the records.

The Records Center / Archives (Records Storage)

A records center and an archive serve different purposes. An archive stores permanent records or records with an “indefinite” retention period. A records center stores inactive records. Archive records and inactive records may be stored in the same location, but be careful not to mix the two in the same storage containers. In addition, do not mix records series in boxes except when a series is small and all series have the same retention period.

Here are a few considerations:

- A Records Transmittal form should be used to transfer records from active use to the records center (example attached at the end of the chapter).
- If your records will be stacked, consider the floor strength. Remember, as mentioned earlier archive cartons can weigh 30-50 pounds each.
- Ideally, relative humidity should range between 30 and 60 percent and temperatures between 65 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit for the protection of the paper and the comfort of the employees who may be working in the center.
- Records should be secure from hazards like fire, water, vermin, vandals, and rioters.
    1. A smoke detector provides warning before the heat triggers the sprinkler system causing serious water damage.
    2. Firewalls and non-combustible roofs provide added protection.
    3. Records should not be located under water pipes. Basements are also subject to water hazards. Exception: sprinkler systems with a low-delivery rate are necessary to prevent fire damage. If records are located in a basement, a water sensing device is advised.
    4. Records centers without windows are preferable, and the doors should be secure with access limited to authorized personnel. Alarm systems contribute added security.
- Records Centers should be located within a few blocks of your office unless there is a courier who could retrieve and deliver documents.
- Poor lighting hinders records filing and retrieval. Fluorescent, continuous strip (single tube), lights should not be more than 9 inches wide and should be at least 12 inches higher than the top of the highest record storage container.
- If steel shelving is used for stacking boxes, you may want to consider engineering the shelving for earthquake preparation. The unit constructed using bolts rather than clips fare better during earthquakes, and steel shelving fares better than wood.
- The main aisles should be 4 to 6 feet wide to comply with fire regulations and aisles between shelves should be 30 to 36 inches wide.

- Consider the following when evaluating a commercial records center.
    1. Quality, reliability, efficiency and personnel integrity
    2. Spaces and service fees
    3. Adaptability of your organization’s needs
    4. Accessibility and security

CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

CHAPTER 10

RECORDS DESTRUCTION

Administrative Rules

Unless otherwise stated, a retention period is calculated from the date the public record was created. (OAR 166-30-027(2))

No public records of fiscal transactions shall be destroyed, even though the required minimum retention period has passed until after the required audit for the period covered by the public records has been completed and the auditor has released the public records for destruction. (OAR 166- 030 -041)

Public records which are confidential by law must be destroyed by shredding, pulping, or incineration. The destruction should be supervised and witnessed. Records which are not confidential by law may be sold or traded for recycling of the fiber, including provisions that the records are promptly converted (OAR 166-30-060).

Once a record has served its purpose and has met the minimum retention, it is ready for final disposition, either permanent retention or destruction (e.g. burning, shredding, etc.). Records are to be retained at least for the time indicated in the retention schedule. The following are some policies your city may want to adopt in part or in full.

General Records Destruction Policy

All records shall be destroyed upon reaching the minimum retention period. Thus, no city government or storage areas shall store records beyond the minimum retention, unless an exception to the policy applies. Records of a confidential nature should be disposed of by a method that ensures that they are completely destroyed.

Records Destruction Exception Policies

The following exception policies allow retention of records beyond the minimum upon approval by the department director and the City Manager. These policies will control the amount of filing equipment purchased, and the need for off-site storage areas.

Exception Policy #1: If a record has substantial value, the record may be retained beyond the minimum retention with written approval from the City Manager through the department director. Obtain assistance from the records officer.

Exception Policy #2: Likewise, a record retained beyond the minimum retention may be microfilmed with written approval from the City Manager through the department director. Obtain assistance from the records officer.

Exception Policy #3: Further, equipment to house records or microfilm being retained beyond the minimum retention may be budgeted for purchase with written approval from the City Manager through the department director. Obtain assistance from the records officer.

If a document is truly a duplicate, you do not have to account for its destruction. However, keep in mind that a duplicate can be the "record copy", if the duplicate is the only remaining copy. In such instances, the duplicate record cannot be destroyed until the minimum retention is met and a destruction form is completed.

Your city may wish to have the City Manager establish an "Annual Destruction Day" for departments to purge documents *that have met the minimum retention*. Where feasible, regular duties should cease so that maximum effort can be applied to the purge. The departments will prepare the documents for recycling or shredding and will complete the "destruction form" as set forth in this manual. However, departments may also destroy documents throughout the year as the need arises and where the records have met the minimum retention.

METHODS OF DESTRUCTION

Type of Destruction	***Advantages***	***Disadvantages***
Refuse Collection	Easy way to dispose of documents.	Lack of confidentiality.
Incinerating	Confidentiality assured; documents completely disintegrated.	Pollution may violate federal, state, and/or local clean-air regulations.
Shredding	Shredded paper can be bailed and sold.	Documents partially destroyed; confidentiality not completely assured.
Selling as Scrap	Income from sale of scrap; recycling helps environment.	Lack of confidentiality.
Chemical Disintegration	Confidentiality assured; documents completely disintegrated.	Not practical for small business organizations.
Pulping	Confidentiality assured; documents completely disintegrated.	Not practical for small business organizations.
Source: *Records/Info Management and Filing*, Nathan Krevolin.		

Instructions For Records Destruction

Request

Complete a records destruction form (see example in Appendix E). Please attach at least one copy of the record/and or a copy of the series inventory form to assist in considering approval for destruction or a copy of the microfilm format form.

If the records are located in the Records Center, the records officer will initiate the destruction form and send it to the department for the appropriate signature(s).

Eligible For Destruction

Route the form to the city records officer who will verify that the record is eligible for destruction. If so, the records officer will sign and date the form and will return it to the requestor. The record is now eligible for destruction once the department director also signs.

Director's Approval

Have the department director sign for approval. This gives the director one last opportunity to retain the record(s). The director may be aware of circumstances where the records need to be retained for special reasons, especially in instances where there may be pending litigation.

Certificate Of Destruction

Records destroyed in accordance with city retention schedules should have documentation "logging" the records that were destroyed. There may be occasions when you will need to show "proof" that the records were destroyed appropriately, or you may just need to identify some records. The records destruction form provides the information about the records destroyed and includes the signatures of those with authority to destroy records. Forward the original to the records officer for the official permanent record and make a copy for your department records.

If there is a special need to destroy sensitive records, such as those containing individuals' Social Security Numbers, contact the records officer so that special arrangements may be made. If large amounts of the same records are destroyed frequently and the use of the records destruction form is too cumbersome, contact the records officer for special arrangements.

Sign and identify how the record was destroyed. If you destroy public records without legal authority, you may be committing a misdemeanor (ORS 162.305).

CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

CHAPTER 11

ELECTRONIC RECORDS

A. WHAT ARE THEY?

What Is An Electronic Record?

An electronic record is any information recorded in a form that only a computer can process and that is made, received, filed or recorded in pursuance of law or in connection with the transaction of business, whether or not confidential or restricted in use.

This definition of electronic record is inclusive – any information on a public entity's computer can be a public record. Equipment includes workstations, microcomputers, minicomputers, and mainframes. The number and variety of electronic records created by city employees is substantial.

Types Of Electronic Records

The lines between types of electronic records are becoming increasingly blurred. Numerous software applications combine graphics, text, and sound into single records. Networked systems allow multiple authors to work on a single document. As software becomes more sophisticated, the electronic record can assume different forms depending on the software used to access it. There are, however, some distinct types of electronic records which can be identified.

- **Text** – Although text has traditionally been used to prepare hard copy records, more and more text documents are being created for electronic use only. Even so, most electronic text documents are drafts and copies of letters, memos, reports, and publications. Text documents are usually created using word processing, or e-mail programs most software (including spreadsheet and database management programs) can also create text documents.

- **Database and Database Management** – Databases store vast amounts of information on a variety of subjects. Databases contain text, numbers, graphics, or data fields.

  Database management systems (DBMS) are software systems used to access and retrieve data elements stored in a database. The data elements are stored randomly, and each data element has an embedded address system or pointer. The

DBMS allows access to the data and combines data elements into records or files to meet user specifications. You can think of a database as a box full of Legos and the DBMS as the way of putting the Legos into recognizable shapes.

A specialized type of DBMS is the geographic information system (GIS). A GIS enables a user to present database information graphically. Database information is combined with map data to present information in ways that traditional DBMS's cannot. Users of GIS applications include natural resource and planning agencies.

- **Electronic Mail** – (E-mail) is any memo, letter, note, report, or communication among individuals and groups that is stored and/or transmitted in a format that requires an electronic device to capture and access. The term also refers to a package of software or services designed to automate office communication. E-mail can be a public record and should be filed and retained as any other public record.

  As a public employee, you have an obligation to apply the appropriate retention to the e-mail you send and receive. You are also obligated to provide access to your e-mail in compliance with the public records law. The retention requirements apply to records that are either created or received "in connection with the transaction of public business. All public records, including e-mail, should be disposed of according to the appropriate retention schedule. The City Records Retention Schedule specifies how long the e-mail needs to be kept to satisfy administrative, legal, fiscal, and historical requirements. Retention is determined by the function and content of records, regardless of their physical form and are issued and authorized by the State Archivist.

  Following this chapter is a sample policy entitled "Secretary of State Policy, Information Systems 05.01 Electronic Mail (E-Mail), which defines e-mail, and discusses filing and retention periods for e-mail.

- **Electronic Communication** – The Public Meetings Law expressly recognizes that meetings may be accomplished by telephone conference calls or "other electronic communication." Such meetings are subject to the Public Meetings Law. ORS 192.670(1). Communications between and among a quorum of members of a governing body convening on electronically linked personal computers are subject to the Public Meetings Law if the communications constitute a decision or deliberation toward a decision for which a quorum is required, or the gathering of information on which to deliberate.

- **Graphics** – Graphics are available from many sources. ~~.~~ A variety of software packages allow users to create graphics ranging from the simple to the complex. Scanners and video conversion hardware also allow for the direct input of images into electronic storage.

- **Multi-media** – Multimedia is a type of interactive record combining graphics, text, audio and video. Office software can also create records which combine elements of word processing spreadsheet, database, presentation software, and others.

Policy: 05.01 Electronic Mail (E-Mail)

Secretary of State
Policy, Information Systems
05.01 Electronic Mail (E-Mail)

(1) PURPOSE. Electronic mail is a Secretary of State resource and is provided as a business communications tool. All Agency electronic mail is a public record (ORS 192) and is subject to inspection and disclosure, and scheduled retention and disposition. Employees should have no expectation of privacy in their use of electronic mail.

(2) RESPONSIBILITIES.

(a) Secretary of State: Implement, maintain and communicate to all employees an agency policy on electronic mail (E-mail) use.

(b) Division Directors: Develop division procedures as appropriate to implement the agency E-mail policy. These procedures should specify whether E-mail documents should be filed electronically or as paper; establish appropriate use of E-mail within the Secretary's policy; establish procedures, where applicable, for providing public access to electronic files and establish fees charged for requests; and monitor compliance with agency policy and division procedures.

(c) Information Systems Section: Support and maintain the E-mail system; provide routine backup and off-site storage of E-mail files for disaster recovery purposes only.

(d) All employees: Comply with agency policy and divisional procedures.

(3) PRIVACY/PUBLIC ACCESS:

(a) The Secretary of State reserves the right to monitor E-mail messages and to access employee E-mail.

(b) No employee shall read E-mail received by another employee when there is no business purpose for doing so.

(c) No employee shall send E-mail under another employee's name without authorization.

(d) No employee shall change any portion of a previously sent E-mail message without authorization.

(4) APPROPRIATE USE.

(a) E-mail shall be used for business matters directly related to the business activities of the Secretary of State and as a means to further the agency mission by providing services that are efficient, complete, accurate, and timely.

(b) E-mail shall not be used for personal gain, outside business activities, political activity, fundraising, or charitable activity not sponsored by the State of Oregon or the Secretary of State.

(c) E-mail shall not be used to promote discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, political affiliation, religion, disability or sexual preference; promote sexual harassment; or to promote personal, political or religious business or beliefs.

(5) FILING AND RETENTION. (a) The Secretary of States Policy is to provide for efficient retention of e-mail communications. E-mail communications are considered public records and retention and disposition of public records is authorized by retention schedules issued by the Archives Division.

(b) Divisions may retain e-mail in hard copy, electronically, or by a combination of these two means. Divisions are responsible for developing filing systems which include e-mail and are responsible for instructing employees on appropriate use of these systems.

(c) When appropriate, e-mail messages may be filed with program records and assumes the same retention as the records they are filed with. When e-mail records do not relate obviously or directly to a program, they may be filed as correspondence. When they are filed as correspondence, the retentions contained in OAR 166, Division 300 may be used.

(d) Some e-mail systems enable users to enclose or attach records to messages. These enclosed or attached records need to be filed according to their function and content, and they will assume the retention of the records they are filed with.

(6) Employees found to have violated any provision of this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

ARCHIVES DIVISION: E-mail filing and disposition procedures.

Effective date: May 1, 1996
Applies to: All employees
Reference: Secretary of State Personnel Policy PRS 10.015

1. Filing: All E-mail communication other than “ephemeral correspondence” shall be printed and filed in accordance with procedures established by each unit for maintenance of its files.

2. Ephemeral Correspondence may be deleted when read.

3. Communications received by means of subscription to Internet mailing list (listserv) shall not be considered public records under the terms of ORS 192.005(5) and/or 192.410(4) unless there is obvious cause to do so.

B. ELECTRONIC RECORDS: ACCESS AND PRIVACY

Is Public Access Necessary?

Under Oregon’s Public Records Law, the public is guaranteed the right to “inspect any public record of a public body in this state” except for those specifically exempted from disclosure by law. This also includes electronic records. In addition to being required by law, providing public access to electronic records is good common sense. The public has a right to access information that is generated by its government. Open government is fundamental to our democratic society – access to records insures that government is accountable to its citizens. And finally, in many cases it is easier to answer public record requests for electronic records than it is to answer requests for paper records.

Types Of Access

- Copying electronic records is one easy way to provide access to them. Copies can be on a number of media, including: floppy disk, magnetic tape, optical and compact disks, computer-output microfilm (COM), and paper.

- Public access terminals can be provided to allow direct access to electronic public records. In some instances, agencies provide dedicated terminals for public use. In others, the public is granted a specified amount of time on an agency computer and must make arrangements to access the information.

- Dial-up access allows users to access information using a modem connection to a computer or computer network.

Access And The Law

Several statutes relate directly to the responsibilities of record custodians to provide access to electronic records.

> ORS 192.430(1) **Functions of custodian of public records.** (1) The custodian of any public records, including public records maintained in machine readable or

> electronic form…shall furnish proper and reasonable opportunities for inspection and examination of the records in the office of the custodian and reasonable facilities for making memoranda or abstracts therefrom, during the usual business hours, to all persons having occasion to make examination of them. If the public record is maintained in machine readable or electronic form, the custodian shall furnish proper and reasonable opportunity to assure access.
>
> ORS 192.440(2) **Certified copies of public records; fees.** If the public record is maintained in a machine readable or electronic form, the custodian shall provide copies of the public record in the form requested, if available. If the public record is not available in the form requested, it shall be made available in the form in which it is maintained.
>
> ORS 192.440(3) The public body may establish fees reasonably calculated to reimburse it for its actual cost in making such records available including costs for summarizing, compiling or tailoring such record, either in organization or media, to meet the person's request.

Access and Privacy

Oregon does not have a general privacy law; it relies instead on statutes which exempt specific records and classes of records from disclosure. The Public Records Law (ORS 192) lists exempted records in 192.501 and 192.502. Other exemptions are found throughout the statutes.

Oregon's Public Records Law strongly favors open records. According to the Attorney General's Office, "The guiding principle is: Exemptions do not prohibit disclosure."[1] In many instances, this leaves the decision about disclosing information to the record custodian. If there are any questions about disclosure, you should consult your city's legal counsel.

Separation Of Information

Exempt and non-exempt information should be separated if possible, so that non-exempt information can be released to the requester. This can be done fairly simply with most electronic records, although information stored on CD-ROM and WORM optical disks is difficult to separate.

Access And Security

Records systems must be protected against unauthorized access for two reasons. First, information in electronic records systems must be protected from intentional or accidental alteration. Second, the system must prevent access to information which is restricted by law. These objectives are easily accomplished when access is provided by copying the information. On-line access and public access terminals usually require software which uses passwords and user ID's to restrict access to information to those authorized to use (and in some cases, change) system information.

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[1] For a full discussion of privacy and the Public Records Law, see *Attorney General's Public Records and Meetings Manual*, Oregon Department of Justice, September 15, 1997.

C. ELECTRONIC STORAGE MEDIA

Media Types

Digital Imaging is the creation or conversion of documents into electronic images.

Floppy disk is a magnetic information storage medium consisting of a circular polyester substrate coated on one or both sides with magnetic oxide and enclosed within a stiff envelope. Disks are 3.5 inches in diameter and can hold up to 1.44 MB of data.

Flash drive or flash stick is a digital storage medium that is a 'plug & play' device, accessed through a USB port, and can hold up to 2 GB of data.

Hard disk is a magnetic information storage medium consisting of several circular polyester substrates coated on one or both sides with magnetic oxide and enclosed within a mechanism which brings the correct disk in contact with the disk drive's heads. Hard drives can be internal or external and typically hold up to 100 GB of data.

Magnetic tape is an information storage medium consisting of a magnetic coating on a flexible backing in tape form. Magnetic tape can be stored on reels or on cassettes.

Optical disk is a non-contact, random-access disk tracked by optical laser beams and used for mass storage and retrieval of digitized text and graphics. It is sometimes called an optical digital disk or optical digital data disk. These disks can store between 640 MB and 2.6 GB of computer data and audio depending on the size and type of disk. CD-R is a read only optical disk. CD-RW are erasable optical disks that use a surface which can be melted and repitted, allowing the medium to be re-used.

Videodisk and *videotape* record and store pictures or pictures and sounds as analog signals.

Computer output microfilm (COM) is computer output produced directly onto microfilm/microfiche, without paper printout as an intermediary.

Selecting Storage

The following items should be considered when selecting storage media:

- *Access*

Records custodians must provide access to electronic records (see *Access and Privacy)*. Retrieving specific pieces of information from some storage media is easier than from others. Generally, retrieval is slower and more difficult from analog media (paper or microfilm) than it is from digital media. As a rule of thumb, if records are accessed with any frequency, they should be stored on digital media or returned to on-line storage.

- *Cost*

Cost of storage media involves more than just dollar-to-megabyte ratios. Other costs that should be included are personnel, special environmental costs for storage locations, special equipment costs to house storage media (like racks for hanging tapes), lease costs of storage floor space, and any conversion costs for moving information to the storage medium.

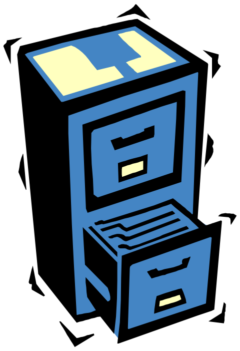
- *Legality*

Paper and microfilm are recognized by all courts as acceptable sources of evidence. In most cases, electronic records can also be admitted in court as evidence. This applies even to records which are only maintained in electronic form. Electronic records can be admitted in court as hard copy output, on-screen output, COM output, or as a summary. Certain system precautions should be taken, however. Electronic record systems must be able to track and verify the date of a “record”, the date(s) of any alternations, and the authority for creating or altering a record. In many cases systems experts will probably be required to verify the accuracy of computer records introduced as evidence.

- *Longevity*

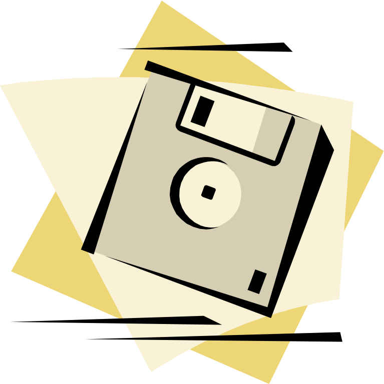
Some media are more prone to data loss and degradation than others. Paper and silver halide microforms are by far the most stable and long-lived media for data storage. Information stored in these media, however, lack some of the special features of electronic records, such as searchability. The life-span of electronic storage media range from roughly five years for videotape to ten-plus years for optical disks. The State Archives recommends that electronic records be stored in hard copy as well if they will be needed for a longer period of time than the proven life-span of the electronic storage media can.

Selected Electronic Storage Media

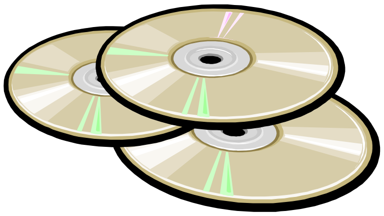


Pre-Electronic High Density Storage Unit

PC Hard Drive and External Hard Drives



3.5" Floppy Disk



CD's/DVD's

Storage Standards

Storage areas for electronic records should maintain a constant temperature between 62°F and 68°F and a constant relative humidity between 35% and 45%. Magnetic tapes should be rewound annually. Any records which have been maintained on magnetic tape or optical disk for ten years should be copied onto new tapes or disks. Tape containers and disks should be labeled. Tapes and disks should be stored in vertical position and kept away from strong electrical and magnetic fields. No unauthorized person should have access to electronic records. Prohibit eating or drinking in the storage room.

D. ELECTRONIC MAIL

What is Electronic Mail?

The term "electronic mail," or "e-mail," refers to a communication tool, and also to the files produced by such communication. One confusing thing about e-mail is its eclectic nature – phone messages, calendars, leave slips, notes, letters, memos, and any number of attached documents are all sent routinely through e-mail systems. Trying to manage the public information transmitted and stored in an e-mail system can be challenging.

Is E-mail A Public Record?

Under Oregon's public records law, e-mail messages can be public records. The definition of public records in ORS 192.005 includes any "document, book, paper, photograph, file, sound recording, machine readable electronic record or other material…regardless of physical form or characteristics, made, received, filed or recorded in pursuance of law or in connection with the transaction of public business…"

For further information, refer to the Oregon State Archives' E-mail Frequently Asked Questions page:

http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/banners/recmgmt.htm

Access and Privacy

E-mail records, like other public records, must be available, upon request, to any member of the public, unless the record is exempt by law from disclosure. For more information on this subject see *Electronic Records: Access and Privacy.*

Retention

E-mail that constitutes a public record needs to be identified, managed, protected, and retained as long as needed to meet the administrative, legal, financial, and historical needs of the city. Records needed to support program functions should be retained, managed, and made accessible in a separate filing system in accordance with the appropriate program unit's standard filing practices. Users should:

- Delete e-mail records after they have been filed in a record keeping system
- Delete records of transitory or little value that do not document agency activity

Examples of messages sent by e-mail that typically are public records include:

- Policies and directives
- Correspondence or memoranda related to official business
- Work schedules and assignments
- Agendas and minutes of meetings
- Drafts of documents that are circulated for comment or approval
- Any document that initiates, authorizes, or completes a business transaction
- Final reports or recommendations

Examples of messages that typically do not constitute a public record are:

- Personal messages or announcements
- Copies or extracts of documents distributed for convenience or reference
- Announcements of social events
- Messages received via a listserv
- Spam

As with other records, retention periods for e-mail records are based on their administrative, legal, fiscal, and historical value. E-mail itself is not considered a record series. E-mail is simply a medium that creates and transmits records that have retention periods. Public business is subjected to the same laws, regardless of whether it is in a paper filing system or an e-mail system. Before you can identify the retention period of an e-mail message, you must examine its content. You can then determine what type of record the e-mail actually is and which records series it falls under. In other words, each e-mail message must be categorized and retained according to its content, rather than simply lumped in with all other e-mail messages. E-mail should be retained in accordance with written retention policy and rules (see Chapter 2—Policy). Following these retention rules will protect both employees and the organization.

Because an e-mail message may be filed in multiple records series, users should identify any and all records series it belongs to. An e-mail message will generally have the same retention period as records in other formats that are related to the same program or function. For example, e-mail relating to an agency's budget submission would be handled and retained just as a paper printout of an agency budget document.

Storage

Both retention and access must be considered when storing e-mail records. The storage media must have a life span sufficient to insure the retention of e-mail records for as long as they are valuable to the agency using them. Records officers, program managers, and systems managers should establish indexing standards for providing access to stored e-mail records. (*See Electronic Records: Storage Media and Electronic Records: Access and Privacy.)*

E-Mail and Standards

Standards impact the use and form of e-mail records. Records officers should assist in the procurement and/or planning of e-mail systems to insure that record requirements are met. An e-mail system should be able to support both the X.400 family of standards for electronic mail. The X.400 standards direct the consistent and orderly exchange of electronic mail messages between different e-mail systems.

For More Information…

For information about e-mail records retention, record storage, and record access, contact the Secretary of State, Archives Division, (503) 373-0701.

For information about e-mail hardware and software standards, contact: Department of Administrative Services, Information Resources Management Division, (503) 378-4126.

E. LEGALITY OF ELECTRONIC RECORDS

Electronic records are increasingly used as the sole means of documenting public agencies' activities. As such, they are often the only evidence available in court cases involving public agencies. As previously mentioned, electronic records are admissible in court as evidence. The keys to using electronic records as evidence in court are identifying electronic records and verifying their authenticity.

Identification of Electronic Records

Identifying electronic records has been a confusing task for many records managers. One solution has been to simply expand the existing definition of record to include electronic, or "machine-readable", records. Oregon defines a public record as

> "…a document, book, paper, photograph, file, sound recording, *machine readable electronic record* or other material, such as court files, mortgage and deed records, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made received, filed, or recorded in pursuance of law or in connection with the transaction of public business, whether or not confidential or restricted in use."

An alternative definition of electronics is:

> *Information which has participated in a transaction, called a record transaction, which takes place whenever information is communicated to a person or to a store of information available to more than one person.*

Two aspects of this definition merit special consideration. First, under this definition, any electronic activity which documents an official transaction is a record. Second, management policy which is concerned with accountability must define what an official transaction is. Agency records officers, program managers, and systems managers must define what constitutes an official transaction.

Authenticity of Electronic Records

Electronic records are easily duplicated, distributed and altered. Electronic records systems must be able to track the dates a record was created or modified, the date(s) of any alterations, and the authority for creating or altering a record. In many cases system experts will be required to verify the accuracy of computer records introduced as evidence. The only sure way to insure the authenticity, and by extension, the legality, of electronic records is to insure that the systems which create electronic records can:

- Document that similar kinds of records generated and stored electronically are created by the same process each time and have a standardized retrieval approach;
- Document that security procedures prevent unauthorized modification of a record and ensure system protection against such problems as power interruptions;
- If vital records are kept in electronic form, document the vital records procedures, including a description of the informational content of the various generations, i.e., the originals and copies of vital records;
- Identify the electronic media on which records are stored throughout their life cycle, the maximum time span that records remain on each storage medium, and the approved retention period of all records;
- Coordinate all of the above with records officers, program managers, systems managers, and legal counsel.

For More Information….

For assistance in identifying electronic records, contact the Oregon State Archives, 800 Summer Street NE, Salem, OR 97310; (503)373-0701.

For assistance in determining the legality of specific electronic records, contact either the Office of the Attorney General or your city attorney.

CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

CHAPTER 12

ELECTRONIC IMAGING

Refer to the following statutes and regulations regarding storage of public records on optical disks.

Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS 192.050)

Copying records; evidentiary effect. A state agency or political subdivision may, with the approval of the proper budgetary authority, cause any public records in its official custody to be photocopied or captured by digital imaging system as in the case of original filings or recordings or recorded by means of analog or digital audio and video tape technology. Each photocopy, digital image and analog or digital audio and video tape shall be made in accordance with the appropriate standard as determined by the State Archivist. Every such reproduction shall be deemed an original; and a transcript, exemplification or certified copy of any such reproduction shall be deemed a transcript, exemplification or certified copy, as the case may be, of the original. [Amended by 1961 c.160 §6; 1991 c.671 §4]
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/ors/192.html>

Oregon Revised Statutes 192.060

Indexing and filing copied records. All photocopies, digital images and analog or digital audio and video tapes made under ORS 192.040 and 192.050 shall be properly indexed and placed in conveniently accessible files.
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/ors/192.html>

Oregon Administrative Rule 166-17-050

Storage Requirements

(1) The following standards apply to the storage of optical disks containing public records:

(a) Environmental conditions for the operation, maintenance, and storage of digital imaging system equipment and storage media shall meet or exceed manufacturer's specifications;

(b) Digital imaging system equipment shall be maintained in proper working condition. Manufacturers' guidelines for preventive maintenance shall be followed, and defective equipment shall not be used.

(2) In addition to the standards in section (1) of this rule, the following standards apply to the long-term storage of information on optical disk:

(a) Digital images shall be recorded and stored by means of a technology that does not allow their subsequent revision or replacement;
(b) The optical disk substrate shall be either polycarbonate or tempered glass;
(c) Only optical disks with a 20 year life expectancy based on accelerated aging tests linked to specific disk locations may be used;
(d) Digital imaging system storage media shall be inspected annually. This inspection should include visual examination of the medium and its housing, followed by the retrieval or playback of recorded information. Documentation describing each inspection shall be maintained for each digital imaging system and shall include the date of inspection, name of inspector(s), storage media inspected, and sample size (if applicable).
<http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/rules/OARS_100/OAR_166/166_017.html>

Administrative Rule (OAR 166-17-080(1)(2))

Retention Period

(1) Public records with a scheduled retention period of less than 100 years may be stored on optical disk devices. The original record may be disposed of following verification of acceptable optical image quality. Images stored on optical disks shall be copied onto new optical disks after no more than ten years. Images must be recopied until the retention period of the original public records has been satisfied.

(2) Public records with a scheduled retention period of 100 years or more may be stored on optical disk devices provided that the original records are retained in hard copy or on microfilm for the entire scheduled retention period.

Standards

The City of Salem/Marion County Data Center has conducted extensive research into the industry. The amount of data that can be stored on disks ranges from 120 megabytes to 1.2 gigabytes. Since there are not standards between vendors, and in many cases, disks manufactured in the past cannot be "read" on their own current equipment, optical disk technology resembles personal computer technology a few years ago. Therefore, until standards are established by the State Archivist and by the vendors themselves, agencies who purchased and use optical disk systems for records storage are on their own – both in choosing systems and when challenged by the courts where optical disks storage has replaced the paper copy before the minimum retention was met.

Administrative Rule (OAR 166-30-070)

Microfilming: Microfilming may be substituted for any paper or machine readable records if it is made according to the following conditions:

1. A security copy of microfilm of public record which has a required minimum retention period of 100 years or longer must be made and stored in accordance with OAR 166-25-005 to 166-25-030. A security copy must be reserved and used solely as a backup security copy or as a master for making working copy duplicate film when required.
2. Working copies of microfilm, and microfilm of public records with a minimum retention of less than 100 years, may be made in accordance with agency standards and requirements for the retention of the public records, including the option of using any film, processing system, or storage containers the agency may select.

Additional information may be obtained regarding State Archives and Records Management from the State of Oregon web site at http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us.

Available Technologies

- ⇒ Basic microfilm 16 mm and 35 mm
- ⇒ Fiche type microforms
- ⇒ Aperture cards
- ⇒ CAR Systems
- ⇒ Optical Disk Storage
- ⇒ Bar Code Indexing
- ⇒ COM (computer output microfilm)
- ⇒ COLD (computer output to laser disk)

Confusing? Yes.

Necessary? Check and make sure there is a need for microfilming before investing time and money.

Microfilming Services

Effective July 1, 1991, the Oregon State Archives will no longer furnish non-permanent microfilming services, but will perform microfilming service of permanent records for a fee.

On request, the Oregon State Archives will furnish a list of companies who sell microfilming equipment and/or provide microfilming services.

Micrographics

Micrographics refers to a series of activities which record reduced images of documents, called microimages, onto fine grain, high resolution photographic film in a manner that ensures their reproduction, retrieval, and preservation.

There are two broad types of micrographic processes:

1. Source document microfilm systems, in which microimages are produced on film by photographing paper records.
2. Computer output microfilm, or COM systems, in which microimages are produced on film from digitally encoded data.

Types of Microfilm

Silver halide, diazo and vesicular are the three most popular types of film used in micrographics. Silver halide film is generally used as the original camera film (the film loaded into the camera at the time of photography). Diazo and vesicular film are normally used for producing duplicates of the silver halide camera film. Since diazo and vesicular films deteriorate rapidly, they are inappropriate for the long-term storage of microimages.

Silver Halide Film

This is the only film for use as camera film. Silver halide film requires wet chemical processing and produces a reversed or "negative" image (white characters on a dark background). The characteristics and quality of the final image may be controlled by the exposure and subsequent processing of the film.

Silver halide film is suitable for the preservation of permanent records, and with proper processing and storage, it is acceptable for long-term or archival storage.

Silver film may also be used for creating duplicates of the camera film. Duplicates can be made either in the "negative" image or in a "positive" image (dark characters on a white background), using silver halide film. Silver halide film is expensive, however, and it is usually more economical to use either diazo or vesicular film for duplication.

Diazo Film

Diazo film is used exclusively for duplicate printing and is not made to be used as a camera film. Diazo film is a "sign maintaining" film, which means a negative master will produce a negative copy and a positive master will produce a positive master. The film is exposed by putting the camera (silver halide) films emulsion side in contact with the unexposed diazo film stock. The films are then exposed to a strong ultraviolet light source. Diazo film is developed in an ammonia chamber, in which diazonium salts and azo dyes react to form either a white or colorless character against a colored (dyed) background or a colored character against a white or colorless background, depending on the polarity of the original camera film.

Diazo film is inexpensive, and its ease of use and fast duplicating speed make it ideal for high volume or routine duplicating of camera film. Its characteristics make it unacceptable for long term or archival storage. It should never be used as a back-up or security copy.

Vesicular Film

Vesicular film, like diazo film, contains diazonium salts, but is not coupled with dye compounds to create an image. Rather, the diaxonium salts decompose under ultraviolet light, releasing nitrogen gas in the film base. The ultraviolet light passing through the camera film creates a latent image on the vesicular film during exposure. In the process of the exposed film, the nitrogen released during the exposure bubbles where the ultraviolet light has penetrated the film base. These bubbles, or “vesicles”, become rigid when the film cools, create the final image. The vesicles reflect rather than absorb light. Therefore, vesicular film is a “sign reversing” film, producing a positive duplicate from a negative master, and vice versa.

The film’s sensitivity to light and sign reversing characteristic make it particularly well suited for fast, on line duplication of computer output microfilm.

Vesicular film is comparable in price to diazo film, and like diazo film, it is inappropriate for long term or archival storage.

Microforms

Microform is the generic term referring to the various formats that microfilm take. The specific microform contains the microfilm image. Microforms come in non-perforated stock to allow maximum use of all film area. Film is generally available in widths of 16, 35, 70 and 105 millimeters.

Microforms generally fall into one of two broad categories: roll microfilm or unitized microfilm.

Roll Microfilm

Roll microfilm is simply a length of microfilm rolled onto a spool. The length may contain images laid out in a “cine oriented” manner or in a “comic oriented” manner. Roll film is usually 100 or 125 feet in length (although 200 foot film is not uncommon) and may be either 16mm or 35mm in width.

Roll microfilm may be placed in cassettes or cartridges to eliminate manual threading of film and to protect against dust, dirt, and fingerprints. Due to the proprietary nature of most cartridge or cassette retrieval systems, however, they are not recommended for long-term or archival storage of roll film.

Unitized Microforms
Unitized microfilm formats are those that contain discrete units of information. The "unit" may be a single document or a series of documents relating to a single case or report.

Although there are some variations, unitized microforms fall into three main categories.

Microfiche
Microfiche is a 105mm by 148mm sheet of microfilm which contains microimages permanently arranged in a grid pattern. A header is contained at the top of the sheet for eye-readable (no magnification required) identification of the images. The headers may be color or digitally coded. Microfiche is particularly appropriate for case file report applications which do not require updating.

A variation on standard microfiche is Computer Output Microfiche (COM Fiche). In a typical COM application, digital information is projected on a cathode ray tube and then photographed or digitally encoded information is written directly onto film using a heliumneon (He-Ne) laser. The physical format of the COM Fiche is otherwise identical to source document microfiche.

Jackets
Similar to microfiche, jackets are a 105mm by 148mm unitized carrier with sleeves into which single images may be arranged in a grid pattern. Either 35mm or 16mm images may be used. As with microfiche sheets, jackets may have eye-readable and/or color coded headers. The ability to rearrange your images within the jacket or add subsequent images to the jacket make this format particularly well-suited for case file applications which require occasional updating.

Aperture Cards
An aperture card is an opaque card with an opening to allow one image, usually 35mm or 70mm, to be inserted or mounted. The card itself affords the opportunity to present indexing, descriptive or other textual information in an eye-readable format to facilitate retrieval or understanding of the image. The State Archives does not recommend their use as a permanent storage medium.

Aperture cards are commonly used for large documents which require extremely high resolution and a low reduction ratio, such as engineering drawings, maps, and charts.

A variation of the aperture card, the camera card, has raw film stock pre-inserted in the card itself. Despite its ease of use, the proprietary nature of this technology makes it inappropriate for long-term permanent storage.

If A Need Is Determined. . .

Your needs will be determined by the size of your city, amount of records, available storage space and available finances. Make cost comparison of the microform options based on your volume of records and storage space.

For Assistance Check With:

- The State Archivist
- Your local library
- The International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC)
- The Oregon Association of Municipal Recorders (OAMR)
- Other cities and counties that have already microfilmed their records:
  - Beaverton
  - Lake Oswego
  - Redmond
  - Eugene
  - Clackamas County
  - Lane County

CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

CHAPTER 13

RECORDS DISASTER PLANNING

Your city's records are a valuable resource that requires protection. This resource can be protected at very reasonable expense compared with the cost of disaster recovery. Some major disasters may be unpredictable and beyond our immediate control. Many disasters, however, can be prevented or their effects minimized.

By taking the following measures to protect your city's records and information, you will improve your chances of surviving and recovering from a records disaster:

- Identify and protect vital records
- Develop a plan and procedures to guide your city during and following a records disaster
- Train the staff in emergency procedures
- Test and exercise the plan and procedures periodically

What Is A Records Disaster?

A records disaster is a sudden and unexpected event which results in loss of records or information essential to an organization's continued operation. What if your city suddenly and unexpectedly lost the records or information it needed to perform the functions essential to its primary mission? Could you replace or reconstruct those records and resume normal operations quickly and efficiently? A records disaster plan will help you to do so. Every city's records management program should include procedures designed to prevent a catastrophic event involving its records. Types of disasters include: fire, windstorm, flood, earthquake, vandalism, loss, theft, hacker attacks, and equipment failure. Subtler but still damaging types of records disasters include: leaking pipes, mold, insects, and rodents.

Consider these examples:

> *Example 1*: A broken storm-drain pipe at the University of Oregon Science Library leaked water into an area storing irreplaceable materials. The pipe was broken by vibrations from building construction next door. Two days later another leak, this time in the basement wall, damaged more library materials. (July 1987)

Example 2: About 5:30 p.m. an employee smelled smoke in a state office building. After a half-hour search, a heated hot plate with papers stacked on top was found. (September 1990)

Example 3: A fire at North Salem High School destroyed Student Records. (February 1990)

Consequences

The consequences of not being prepared when disaster strikes are significant and expensive. Information or records could be lost or destroyed which:

- Protect and document the city's legal rights or interests
- Protect and document the rights or obligations of citizens
- Are needed to conduct emergency operations during a disaster
- Are needed to resume operations after a disaster

The examples above yielded these consequences:

Example 1: One hundred seventy-seven research journals and over three hundred other volumes were soaked with water. Thousands of books had to be hurriedly moved to safety. Soaked materials were frozen and taken to Oregon Freeze Dry Foods in Albany where the moisture was removed.

Example 2: The stack of papers was badly scorched, but did not catch fire. The damage would have been much worse had an alert employee had not reported the incident.

Example 3: Some paper records were destroyed, but the information was reconstructed from computer files and teacher grade books.

Could your city restore records lost to any of these causes?

What Can You Do To Prepare?

A records disaster program is an integral part of every records management program. Every city's records management program should include procedures designed to prevent a records disaster. The costs of re-establishing your office in the aftermath of a disaster will far exceed the costs of preparing beforehand.

What Is A Records Disaster Plan?

A records disaster plan is a written, implemented, and periodically tested program to identify, protect, and recover a city's vital records, and to restore normal operations following a disaster.

What Are The Benefits Of A Records Disaster Plan?

Improved protection of important assets.

By identifying, protecting, and if necessary, salvaging/reconstructing the city's vital records, a records disaster plan assures the organization of continued operation despite hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, fires, strikes, etc.

Reduced insurance costs.

Insurance premiums are based on risk. If you can demonstrate reduced risk by having a comprehensive records disaster plan in effect you may save money on insurance. Risk management and prevention are less expensive than paying for recovery in the wake of a disaster.

Improved security

A records disaster plan includes improved procedures to protect city records and information, as well as the facilities and the people who use those records.

Improved general management

Preparing a records disaster plan will bring priorities into perspective, and help management focus on the most important aspects of the city's mission. Disaster planning can create an atmosphere of confidence, because the public will be reassured that reasonable precautions have been taken to insure against disasters.

Improved records and information management

This planning process can be an opportunity to make top management aware of the need for more attention and emphasis on records and information as important city resources to be protected throughout their life cycles. The plan will require a records retention schedule and a comprehensive vital records program.

Increased ability to act decisively in crisis situations

The shock of a major disaster situation typically causes confusion, fear, and ineffectiveness. Disaster planning exercises provide a training ground for staff, and test performance during a simulated disaster.

What will it cost?

The tangible and intangible benefits of a records disaster plan are numerous, but they do not come without expense and effort.

- Staff time to prepare and implement a records disaster plan, and to keep it current.
- Possible building/equipment modifications or repairs to reduce danger or limit the consequences of disaster.
- Possible upgrading of security and insurance programs.
- Costs of preparing records retention schedules and vital records procedures. Possible off-site storage or microfilming costs.
- Purchase of disaster supplies and equipment.

- Possible contracts or agreements for specific related services such as a computer back-up site, freeze drying of water damaged records.
- Training in safety, records security, records salvage and reconstruction, and general crisis management.

These costs must be compared with the potential for huge expenses that can be anticipated from a major disaster.

Many elements of a records disaster program are already in place in most cities, such as insurance programs, building and information security, off-site security storage of microfilmed records and computer tapes. A complete plan, however, will review, coordinate and improve existing elements resulting in a comprehensive, cost-effective program. A records disaster plan will help integrate and manage the city's records and information resources.

What Is Involved In A Records Disaster Program?

Each city's records disaster program must be tailored to its own mission, governmental structure, and resources. It should provide reasonable measures to deal with probable risks. It must be periodically tested and updated. The basic components of a records disaster program are:

- Prevention / Protection
- Vital Records
- Recovery

Prevention / Protection

Prevention is much cheaper and simpler than trying to recover or replace damaged or destroyed records. Most disaster prevention and protection involves straightforward, low cost, common-sense measures such as these:

- Issue a clear policy statement from top management initiating the records disaster program and announcing its objectives.
- Establish responsibility and authority by assigning a staff member to implement and manage the program and prepare a disaster plan. Ideally this should be the city records officer. A team composed of representatives from all functional areas of the organization could be formed to assist the records officer.
- Identify, control and protect vital records.
- Survey the potential hazards to your records correcting as many as possible in cooperation with the building manager. Examples: roof, basement storage, wiring, heating systems, plumbing, unauthorized access, and theft.
- Make sure your insurance coverage is appropriate.
- Contact your city's risk manager, police department and fire department.
- Arrange for help from disaster recovery vendors.
- Assemble and pre-position disaster recovery equipment and supplies.
- Train disaster team members and other employees.

- Periodically test and evaluate the plan and procedures.

Vital Records

Vital records are those records that contain the information needed to continue or re-establish a city's operation following a disaster.

The basic elements of a vital records program are:
- Identify the vital records needing protection
  - ⇒ Inventory all city records
  - ⇒ Classify records according to relative value and essential city functions
- Assess the risks
  - ⇒ Dangers to specific records
- Protective measures
  - ⇒ Duplication for dispersal
  - ⇒ Off-site or remote storage
  - ⇒ On-site secure storage

A city with a vital records program is better equipped to cope with disasters. A well developed records disaster plan will improve your ability to cope with most disasters.

Disaster Recovery

Imagine trying to conduct your city's business without its records – including electronic records. Imagine the cost of trying to replace those records, or reconstructing the information from other resources. Or worse yet – recreating them from scratch.

Disaster recovery is the process of resuming normal operations following a disaster. Some disasters, such as earthquakes or floods are not preventable. However, if your vital records are properly protected before, during and after the disaster, salvage and recovery will be much easier and cheaper.

An effective recovery plan will help impose order in the stressful and chaotic conditions which typically accompany a disaster. It will give you the luxury of making critical decisions in advance. Rapid recovery will promote customer satisfaction and maintain public confidence.

Steps to Recovering After a Records Disaster:
- Establish priorities for restoring city functions.
- Identify priorities for salvaging records.
- Develop a disaster recovery plan
  - ⇒ Quick reaction checklists
  - ⇒ Alternate operating locations
  - ⇒ Inventory of records and equipment

    - ⇒ Supplies and equipment in a safe place, ready to use
    - ⇒ Contracts / agreements with disaster recovery agencies and firms
- Train disaster recovery team and staff.
- Test and revise the plan and procedures.

Publications giving more extensive help in disaster planning and technical guidance on disaster recovery are listed in the *Bibliograph*y.

What Is The Planning Process?

The planning and implementation process will enable an organization to more quickly and efficiently resume normal business after a disaster.

Prevention and recovery can be planned concurrently and integrated into a single plan. Following are some general elements and several specialized elements.

General Elements:

Policy Statement

A records disaster recovery plan is a management function. The planning process must have clear, direct authority from top management in the form of a statement spelling out specific goals and objective. The goal is to specify what the plan will accomplish and inform all staff of what is expected of them.

Activation Authority

The plan must authorize specific staff members to initiate the plan, and under what conditions. What is a disaster to one organization may only be a nuisance to another.

Continuity of Authority

The plan should include a clear statement of the lines of authority which will be in effect during a crisis, and list the staff members responsible for managing the crisis situation and making decisions based on the disaster plan and the current situation.

Task Organization and Assignment

The plan must spell out exactly who will do what. For example, it should assign staff members to action teams to react and recover from a disaster, and list the responsibilities of each team.

Notification Procedures

The plan should include procedures for contacting team members, support agencies, and other resources such as vendors, suppliers and consultants. Emergency contact lists must include contact information for each individual.

A City Spokesman
The plan should designate one staff member to keep the media and employees informed about the disaster and the recovery efforts underway. The media and the public will judge a city's effectiveness and credibility by this.

Specialized Elements:

Priority list of essential functions to restore
The plan should include guidance concerning the priority order in which city functions should be restored following a disaster. This guidance will be the result of a management review of city functions as they pertain to the primary mission. This review would logically occur during identification of the city's vital records.

A Current Records Inventory, Including Vital Records
This inventory will be necessary to help restore essential functions. The list should include record series name, storage media, and location. This list will guide the recovery team and allow them to quickly identify which records must be saved and which can be disposed of.

Blueprints and Building Plans.
These may be very useful during plan development as you go about eliminating or reducing hazards and risks to city records. Things to look for include the locations of utility connections and how to shut off gas, water and electricity. Knowing the routes of plumbing and drains, locations of electrical switches, circuit breakers, and alarms will allow you to plan more effectively. Hazardous materials are also of concern.

Blueprints, plans and drawings can provide an accurate picture of access routes, records and equipment locations. The recovery team needs to know where things are so they can assess the damage and restore city operations.

Alternate Operation Location Information
If alternate locations are needed to restore city operations, they should be clearly identified in the plan. Emergency operations and disaster recovery plans should be outlined in a way that guides the recovery team, reduces confusion and facilitates recovery and restoration.

If the city needs to be able to restore information processing immediately, formal arrangements may be necessary for a hot site or cold site. A hot site is a fully configured computer center with equipment installed and ready to operate. A cold site is a computer site or room that is set up and ready for equipment to be installed and immediately begin operations.

A Current Inventory Of Information Processing And Communications Equipment
This will help restore computer operations if replacement equipment is needed. This inventory must list specific information, such as manufacturer, vendor, equipment model, date purchased, serial number, modifications, and applications.

Contracts Or Agreements With Disaster Support Agencies/Firms
Documentation of all support resources should be a part of the plan. Copies of contracts and agreements for support, salvage, reconstruction, alternate sites, and vendors should be kept with the plan. Informal agreements with civil support agencies such as police and fire department should also be included.

A List Of Disaster Recovery And Salvage Equipment And Supplies
A disaster kit should be assembled. This should contain the equipment and supplies needed to respond to and recover from a disaster. This material should be stored off-site to insure that it will be available. An inventory of the contents of this kit should be included in the plan.

A List Of Additional Recovery Resources
Include contact information for local fire, police, civil defense, ambulance service, disaster response agencies, professional consultants, and vendors. Specific types of support which may be needed includes freezer space and/or freeze drying service, and document restoration.

These general and specialized planning elements are the major building blocks of a records disaster plan. This manual does not provide guidance regarding general disaster issues such as life safety, public order, communications and sanitation.

For more detailed instruction and guidance, refer to Glossary and bibliography. It lists texts and other sources which deal with the technical aspects of disaster recovery.

Recovering From A Water Disaster

Water can get into records in a variety of ways: leaking roofs, pipes, and basements, sewer backup, and fire extinguishing. Some factors to keep in mind during recovery from disasters in which records have been damaged by water:

Paper Records
Speed and organization are critical. Within 24 hours, paper will stick together, and ink may run. Wet paper records can begin to mold in about 48 hours. After five days, wet paper begins the irreversible process of breaking down chemically and physically.

As soon as possible, find out the linear or cubic footage of paper and other records which will need to be dried. Non-vital records are likely not worth the cost to dry and restore.

Remove disposable and replaceable records as soon as practical. This will lower the humidity in the damage area. Keep an inventory for insurance and replacement purposes.

Freeze wet paper records as soon as possible. Blast freezing is the best but normal freezing is acceptable. Once frozen, they are safe from deterioration but still must be dried. Freeze drying and vacuum drying, the quickest and most effective, are usually the most expensive.

Paper records may be air dried if you have the staff, time and space. Air drying may work well for small amounts but does not work for coated (slick) paper. Air dried paper may still need to be treated for mold.

Microfilm and Photos

If silver microfilm is allowed to dry on the reels, it will stick together in a solid mass. The gelatin on all emulsion films will break down and stick together. Color photos will fade. Fungus will destroy images on all types of film. Keep microfilm and photos submerged in water until you can get professional help. Do not freeze wet film or prints.

Electronic Media

Magnetic media is more vulnerable sensitive to heat and water than paper records are. Water damaged magnetic media can be frozen and vacuum dried and then professionally cleaned. Freezing should be done within 48 hours. Isolate wet tapes from other tapes.

Summary

Disaster recovery is the process of resuming business following a disaster. Not being prepared for a records disaster can be expensive and have a significant impact on business operations. The proper protection of vital records before, during, and after a disaster will greatly simplify salvage and recovery operations.

An effective records disaster plan is a way to make critical decisions in advance, before that unexpected event happens. The basic elements of the plan are; prevention and protection, vital records, and recovery. The benefits of a records disaster plan include improved protection of valuable city assets and improved records and information management. The costs of developing and implementing a plan must be balanced against potential losses which would result from a disaster.

The process of developing, implementing, and testing the plan will focus attention on city mission priorities, increase awareness of basic disaster prevention and recovery methods, increase confidence in the efficiency of the city's operations.

CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

CHAPTER 14

VITAL RECORDS

What Are Vital Records?

Vital records are irreplaceable records which your city needs to perform its primary mission. Vital records document the city's legal and fiscal rights and obligations, as well as the rights of citizens. Because vital records are irreplaceable, they require additional levels of protection, and a solid backup plan. A solid vital records program ensures that only the truly vital records and information receive special protection. Direction and support must be provided by top management. Each city should have a records officer who has authority to coordinate a city-wide records management program.

Importance Of A Vital Records Program

A vital records program is a cost-effective way to control the risk of loss to one of your city's most valuable assets. An effective vital records program will increase the likelihood that your organization will be able to function with a minimum of difficulty following a disaster.

A vital records program can:

- Reduce vulnerability to litigation
- Limit exposure to unplanned expenses due to disaster
- Avoid loss of revenue, or sudden loss of efficiency
- Prevent a break in customer service, or shutdown of the city government operations.

Establishing A Vital Records Program

A vital records program is a critical element and an integral part of a comprehensive records management system.

To be successful, your vital records program must be approached from a corporate perspective to insure that truly vital records and information receive special protection. Direction and support must be provided by top management. The city records officer is in an ideal position to assume responsibility for the program, having both a city perspective and a knowledge of city records. With the support of city management, the records officer can develop a program which protects the interests of the city, is effective, and easy to manage. Program managers should be held responsible for protecting vital records in their program area.

There are three basic elements of a vital records program:

- Identify the vital records
- Assess the risks
- Take protective measures

This chapter will explain how to perform each of these three steps.

Identifying Vital Records

Refer to the City Records Retention Schedule to help identify vital records. A common rule of thumb is that roughly 5 to 10 percent of a city's records are considered vital. Vital records are **not** the same as historical records. They **do not** include records which, although important, are replaceable at reasonable expense. Vital records are one of your city's most important resources.

Top management should identify the city's essential functions and the specific records which would be needed to continue or re-establish those essential functions during and following a disaster. Essential functions are those that are critical to the organization's primary mission. The vital records are those records which the city must have to perform the critical elements of its primary mission. This process should produce a vital records master list.

This assessment must be as objective as possible. The records officer and program managers must coordinate with all areas of the city to determine who has the record copy of vital records and who has copies. Close coordination can eliminate useless duplication.

Levels of value may be graded as follows:

1. Non-essential Records. Loss of these records would present no obstacle to restoring city operation.
2. Useful Records. Loss of these records might cause some inconvenience but they could be easily replaced. Loss does not present a real obstacle to restoring city operations.
3. Important Records. These are replaceable, but at great expense. Loss presents aggravating but surmountable obstacles to resumption of operations.
4. Vital Records. These records are irreplaceable. Without these records the city cannot continue operations.

The process of identifying and protecting your city's vital records will require extensive and ongoing cooperation among management and staff. The success of the program depends on the combined judgment and foresight of top management, program managers and records management. The resulting master list of vital records should be reviewed by the city's legal counsel and auditors.

Assessing The Risks

A vital records program is a form of insurance. Risk management is a way to control and minimize risks. You cannot eliminate all risks and hazards to your records, but you can make better decisions before a disaster than during one. Protecting your vital records will come with implementation and maintenance costs, but these costs must be compared with the costs of recovery from a disaster.

These costs will vary greatly, of course, depending on the city mission, location, and type of records. For the program to be cost effective the consequences of losing certain records must outweigh the costs of protecting and preserving them. Certain records can be replaced for less than it would cost to preserve the originals, then they probably aren't vital.

Risk assessment should examine the following areas:

- Environmental risks
- Technical risks
- Security risks

Environmental risks include nature and weather related factors, such as earthquakes, floods, windstorms, and humidity. Building related risks include plumbing, wiring, inadequate alarm systems, heating/air conditioning systems, and leaking roofs. Other environmental dangers include mold, insects and animals.

Technical risks are hazards to computer systems and records from things like power surges, static electricity, improper grounding, or poor virus protection. Other problems could be unauthorized access, inadvertent deletion of data, files not backed-up, improper storage for disks/tapes, and incomplete software documentation.

Security risks include risks such as building access, records access, keys, locks, alarms, and improper destruction of confidential records.

By identifying and reducing risks to your records, you will be better positioned to resume business operations in case of a disaster. Once the vital records are identified and the various risks analyzed and minimized, the last step is to decide on economical and effective methods of protection.

An effective vital records program will increase the likelihood that your organization will be able to function with a minimum of difficulty following a disaster.

Protective Measures

The three most common methods of protecting vital records are:

- Duplication and dispersal
- On-site secure storage
- Off-site secure storage

Duplication And Dispersal

Duplication may be performed by various processes, such as photocopying, microimaging, and magnetic tape or disk storage. There are two basic types of duplication, each of which may involve dispersal. The first type involves preparing extra copies when the record is created. The second option is to reproduce existing records for the sole purpose of protection.

Routine dispersal consists of having duplicate copies in a second location for normal business needs. Records are often distributed to other locations as part of regular operating procedure, for example, information copies sent to branch offices and documents filed with other offices or agencies. If you depend on this form of dispersal to protect your vital records in case of a disaster, then the offices or agencies should be made aware of that. Reliable arrangements must be made regarding retention and protection requirements. If records require special equipment to make the information available, such as a computer or microfilm reader/printer, then that equipment must be prepositioned. This built-in or routine dispersal of vital records is the least expensive method.

Improvised or planned dispersal is when an additional copy is created solely for protection. The copy is then sent to a vital records depository or other location for security. At the outset of a vital records protection program, it may be necessary to duplicate all the existing documents. Improvised or planned dispersal tends to be more costly.

On-Site Storage

Vaults, safes, file rooms, and fire-resistant cabinets and containers all provide varying degrees of protection for vital records. They can be located in or near the office area.

Industry standards rate the temperature and humidity tolerances of various types of levels. Paper begins to deteriorate at 350° F and 65% relative humidity while magnetic and photographic media can only tolerate 150° F and 85% relative humidity.

Vaults are very expensive to build but may be justified if the volume of records is high or the needs of the city dictate this level of protection. In buildings with a high risk of fire, a vault may be the only way to protect records. Standard vault doors come with 2-, 4-, and 6- hour ratings. Vaults resist fire, but are vulnerable to water damage. While fire-proof safes do not give as much protection as vaults, they will resist fire for up to 4 hours. Safes are useful for small volumes of records and for locating the records close to the point of use.

File rooms and fire-resistant cabinets and containers naturally provide less protection than the heavily insulated walls and doors of vaults and safes. They are also less expensive.

Evaluate the risks associated with the loss of the information before investing in any of these on site storage options.

Off-Site Storage

Off-site storage facilities can provide extra security and protection to original vital records and economical storage for those that are used very little. It is less likely that an off-site storage facility will be affected by the same disaster that occurs to your primary building. Unlike dispersal techniques where vital records may be distributed to a number of off-site locations, central off-site storage simplifies access. Also, off-site storage usually costs much less than active storage space.

Whether the off-site facility is owned and operated by the organization itself or by another city or commercial firm, certain factors influence the choice of storing vital records in a remote location. The facility should be located away from high risk areas, such as rivers, geological faults, coasts, volcanoes, or man-made structures which might pose a threat. The facility must be accessible to the organization during normal working and emergency conditions. Fire safety, atmospheric conditions, pest control, security and technical services must be carefully evaluated. You may need a communication link between your office and the remote facility. Options include city-owned storage, commercial records centers, and cooperative records centers.

You should make your decision of how to protect your vital records primarily on the basis of cost-effectiveness. Since relative security is all you can expect to achieve, the best choice is the one which best balances the cost of protection and the degree of risk.

Vital Records Operating Procedures

Your city will need written policies and procedures covering the use of vital records during daily activities, in emergencies, and after disasters. The procedures should cover at least the following areas:

- Access to vital records
- Use of vital records
- Transfer and disposition of vital records
- Emergencies
- Disaster Recovery

Vital records policies should be communicated to the entire staff. The staff should be trained in emergency procedures so that everyone knows what to do when disaster strikes. The city should also have a plan for resuming operations following a disaster. This plan should be tested periodically.

Summary

A vital records program is a cost-effective way to control the risk of losing your city's vital records, an irreplaceable asset. They document essential functions which are critical to your primary mission. The vital records program should be an integral part of a comprehensive records management system. The program involves identifying the vital records, assessing and minimizing the risks to those records and then taking protective measures. These efforts should be tied together by implementation of city-wide policies staff training.

The need for a disaster salvage operation is directly related to the identification and protection of an organization's vital records. A good vital records plan will lessen a city's need for disaster recovery.

For more information regarding records disaster planning see *Disaster Preparedness & Recovery Manual*.

Publications giving more extensive help in disaster planning and technical guidance concerning actual disaster recovery are listed in *Bibliography.*

CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

APPENDIX ‘A’

NETWORKING

One of your biggest assets will be networking with other City Recorders, Records Managers and the State Archivist, who is:

Roy Turnbaugh
State Archivist
800 Summer Street NE
Salem, OR 97310
(503)373-0701

Also, you may find membership in the following organizations helpful, which provide beneficial newsletters, handbooks, and educational opportunities:

Oregon Association of Municipal Recorders (OAMR)

Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA)

National Association of Government Archivists and Records Administrators (NAGARA)

International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC)

CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

APPENDIX 'B'

GLOSSARY

Access – The availability of or the permission to consult records, archives, or manuscripts.

Accession – The act and procedures involved in transfer of records or papers into the physical custody of an archival agency, records center, or manuscript repository.

Active Record – Records maintained in an area where the records are actively referred to during everyday operations. Usually are no older than two years and are referred to at least by-monthly.

Adequacy of Documentation – A standard of sufficiently and properly recording actions and/or decisions. Derives from the legal requirement that "agency heads", make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organizations functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency and designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the government and of persons directly affected by the agency's activities.

Administrative Records – Records relating to budget, personnel, supply and similar housekeeping or facilitative functions common to most agencies, in contrast to program records.

Administrative Value – A record that assists in the operation of government and insures administrative consistency and continuity.

Alphabetical File -- A file in which documents are arranged alphabetically by name or subject.

Alphanumeric – A filing system or code which combines alphabetic and numeric symbols to classify records.

Appraisal – The process of determining the value and thus disposition of records based on their current administrative, legal, and fiscal use; their evidential and informational or research value; and their relationship to other records.

Archival Records – Records of continuing and enduring value useful to the citizens and necessary to the administrative functions of public agencies in conduct of those services and activities mandated by law.

Archival Value – A record having continuing/long term value and is usually assigned a “permanent” or indefinite retention period.

Archives – Those records of any public institution which are adjudged worthy of permanent preservation for reference and research purposes and which have been selected for deposit in the permanent city archives.

Archives Administration – The management or direction of the program of and archival agency, including the following basic functions: appraisal, disposition, accessioning, preservation, arrangement, description, reference service, exhibition, and publication.

Audio Visual Records – Records in pictorial or oral form, regardless of format. Includes still photographs (or still pictures), graphic arts (poster or original art), motion pictures, video recordings, audio or sound recordings, and related records.

Case File – Groupings of documents that pertain to a particular person place or thing. A case or project file may consist of correspondence, form records, memoranda or a combination of those all of which pertain to the same person, place or thing.

Central Files – The records or files of one or several offices or organizational units physically and/or functionally centralized and supervised in one location.

Closed File – A file in which action has been completed and to which further documents are not likely to be added.

Computer Output Microfilm (COM) – The process of converting the data on a magnetic computer tape directly onto microfilm.

Confidential Records – A record of information requiring protection against unauthorized disclosure.

Continuing Authorization – This is the legal authority to destroy currently created records at a designated time or upon fulfillment of specific events or conditions.

Copy – A reproduction of the contents of an original document. Copies identified include action copy, information or reference copy, official file copy, read or chronological file copy, suspense or tickler file copy, and stock copy.

Correspondence – Letters, memorandums, notes, telecommunications, and any other form of addressed, written communications sent and received.

Cubic Feet – For records inventory purposes, an approximate measurement to describe the amount of space records occupy. Approximations: Letter size file drawer = 1.5 c.f.; legal size file drawer = 2 c.f.; legal/lateral size = 4.5 c.f.; single file folder (3/4" thick) = .10 c.f.; one carton (15"x12"x10") = 1 c.f.

Current Records – Records regularly used for the conduct of the current business of an organization.

Custody – Guardianship, or control, of records including both physical possession and legal responsibility, unless one or the other is specified.

Deacidification – The process by which the pH of a paper document is raised to a minimum of 7.0 to assist in its preservation. The process is now generally used before documents are thermoplastically laminated.

Declassification – The purpose or result of determining that information is no longer confidential.

Disposition – The actions taken with regard to non-current records following their appraisal. The actions include transfer to a records center for temporary storage, transfer to an archival agency, donation to an eligible repository, reproduction of microfilm and destruction.

Dossier – An accumulation of documents in a folder or other file unit, concerned with the same purpose and filed together to give information about a real or corporate person. The term is sometimes applied to a case file or a particular transaction.

Electronic Record Keeping – A system of record keeping in which information is stored on electronic or optical media instead of recorded on paper and is identified, controlled, and disposed of according to records management practices.

Encapsulation – A method of providing support to a fragile and brittle document, which generally is in a single sheet format, by placing the document between two sheets of polyester film, the edges of which are held together by double-sided tape, machine sewing, heat seal or ultrasonic weld.

Environment – Conditions surrounding the system that influence the system's operation.

Exempt Records – These are documents which can be destroyed under ORS 192.170 when no longer needed for administrative purposes and without authorization by the State Archivists. Including are the following:

1. Inquiries and requests from the public and answers thereto not required by law to be preserved or not required as evidence of public or private legal right or liability.

2. Public records which are duplicated by reason of their having been photocopied.
3. Letter of transmittal and acknowledgement, advertising, announcements, and correspondence or notes pertaining to reservation of accommodations or scheduling of personal visits or appearances.

Facsimile (FAX) – An exact copy of a document, drawing, photograph, or the like. A method or devise for transmitting such a copy via telephone or radio for reproduction elsewhere.

Fumigation – The process of exposing records, usually in a vacuum or other airtight chamber, to poisonous gas or vapor to destroy insects, mildew, or other forms of life that may endanger them.

Governmental Records – The term "governmental records" mean state and local records, including all cards, correspondence, discs, maps, memoranda, microfilms, papers, photographs, recordings, reports, tapes, writings, and other data, information or documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, storage media or conditions of use, made or received by an office or agency of the state and an officer or agency of the county, city, town, school, district, municipal subdivision or corporation or other public authority or political entity within the state pursuant to state law or in connection with the transaction of public business by an officer.

Holding Maintenance – Unfolding documents, placing them in acid-free folders and boxes and shelving them in environmentally controlled and secure storage.

Image, Microfilm – A microimage of one side of a single document.

Inspection, Microfilm – Periodic checks of stored original silver halide microfilmed records (and duplicate records stored for security purposes) to detect deterioration or damage (e.g. for brittleness, buckling, mold or mildew, discoloration or fading.)

Inventory – A descriptive list of each record series giving such data as title, inclusive dates, quantity, arrangement, relationships to other series, and description of subject content. A survey of records conducted prior to disposition or the development of records retention schedules.

Lamination – (1) A mechanically assisted process, generally proceeded by de-acidification, for reinforcing a weak or damaged paper document by enclosing it between two sheets of plastic foil, usually cellulose acetate, and two sheets of tissue which, through the application of heat and pressure, become thermoplastic and impregnate the original. More properly referred to as thermoplastic lamination to distinguish it from hand lamination or commercial and industrial lamination process. (2) A manual process for protecting or reinforcing a weak or damaged paper document by enclosing it between two sheets of tissue which are bound to the document by acetate.

Legal Size – A standard paper size 8 ½ x 14 inches. Capable of holding legal size papers or documents.

Letter Size – A standard size paper 8 ½ x 11 inches. Capable of holding letter size papers or documents.

Linear Foot – The measurement of shelf space occupied by records. One linear foot of textual records is the equivalent of one cubic foot.

Logical Record – A compilation of related data elements, referring to one person, place, thing, or events, which are treated as a unit. Logical records can have a specified number of characters (fixed length records) or the number of characters in each record can vary within limits (variable length records).

Machine Readable Records – Information recorded on media such as magnetic tapes, disks, diskettes, optical disks or punched paper, the information is coded for retrieval by machines. Increasingly referred to as electronic records.

Microfiche – A sheet of microfilm containing multiple microimages in a grid pattern. It usually uses a title which can be read without magnification.

Microfilm -- A fine grain, high resolution film containing an image greatly reduced in size from the original. The recording of microphotographs on film.

Non-Record – Published books and pamphlets, book and pamphlets printed by a governmental printer, worksheets used to collect or compile data after that data has been included in a record, answer pads for a telephone or other informal notes, desk calendar, stenographers' notebooks after the information contained there in has been transcribed, unused forms except ballots and as indicated in a retention schedule, brochures, newsletters, magazines, newspapers except those excerpts used a evidence of publication, scrapbooks, and physical property artifacts.

Non-Record Materials – Government owned information materials excluded from the legal definition of records. Included extra copies of documents kept only for convenience of reference, stocks of publications and of processed documents, and library or museum materials intended solely for reference or exhibition. Also called non-records.

Numerical File – A file in which documents are arranged in numerical sequence as a primary means of reference.

Office Files And Memoranda – All records, correspondence, exhibits, books, booklets, drawings, maps, blank forms, or documents not defined and classified as official public records; all duplicate copies of official public records filed with a public agency; all documents and reports made for internal administration of the office which they pertain but not required by law to be filed or kept with such agency; and all other documents or records determined to be office files and memoranda.

Office Of Record – The office assigned the responsibility for the custody and maintenance of the records of the activities it serves.

Permanent Record – Records which have a permanent or enduring historical, administrative, legal or fiscal value and, in consequence thereof, should be retained and preserved indefinitely.

Personnel Record – Any item, collection, or grouping of information about an individual that is maintained by an agency. It includes, but is not limited to, the individual's education, financial, medical, or employment history, or items that contain or make reference to the individual's name, identifying number, symbol, or other identifying particular assigned to the individual such as finger or voice print or photograph.

Physical Record – A record treated as a unit because of its physical form. A collection of data defined in terms of physical parameter, rather than logical content.

Political Subdivision – This means a city, county, or district, or any other municipal or public corporation of this state.

Processing, Microfilm – Developing and fixing images on film after exposure.

Production, Microfilm – Exposing images on film and processing them for inspection, duplication and use.

Protective Enclosure – Various types of protective containers for the storage of fragile items.

Public Record – Those records created by public funds which are adjudged worthy of permanent preservation for reference and research purposes to the creating agency, other state agencies, and/or the public and which have been deposited or selected for deposit in the State Archives.

"Public Records" shall include all written, typed or printed books, papers, letters, documents and maps made or received in pursuance of law by the public officers of the state, counties, municipalities and other subdivisions of government in the transaction of public business and shall also include any records authorized to be made by any law of this state belonging or pertaining to any court of record or any public record authorized by law or any papers, pleading, exhibit, or other writing filed with, in or by any such court, office or officer.

Quality Assurance And Inspection – Those procedures required to ensure good quality exposed original silver halide microfilm and reproduction made from them.

Includes but not limited to such tests as those for residual hypo thiosulfate, density, resolution and base fog as defined by AIIM/ANSI standards.

Record – Any nonverbal information created or received pursuant to law, charter, ordinance, or in connection with any other activity relating to or having effect upon the transaction of public business, regardless of physical form or characteristics. Records include but not limited to: correspondence, memoranda, publications, forms, ledgers, vouchers, personnel data, magnetic and paper tapes, cards and disks, maps, photographs, engineering drawings, computer generated information and microfilm.

Record keeping Requirements – Statements in statutes, regulations, or agency directives providing general and specific information on particular records to be created and maintained by the agency. Since each agency is legally obligated to create and maintain adequate and proper documentation of its organization, functions, and activities, agency record keeping requirements should be issued for all activities, at all levels, and for all media, and should distinguish records from non-record materials for agency purposes.

Records Center – A facility, sometimes especially designed and constructed, for the low-cost and efficient storage and furnishing of reference service on semi-current records pending their ultimate disposition.

Records Coordinator – Coordinates the department's records program by administering records policies and procedures, scheduling record series, supervising the destruction of records, by assisting in establishing and maintaining filing systems; and serves as liaison between the department and the records officer.

Records Management – The application of management techniques to the creation, utilization, maintenance, retention, preservation, and disposition of records, undertaken to reduce costs and improve efficiency in records-keeping. Includes management of filing and microfilming equipment and supplies; filing information retrieval systems; files, correspondence, reports, and forms management; historical documentation; micrographic systems applications; retention scheduling; vital records protection; and disaster recovery.

Records Retention Plan – A two part plan for identifying the permanently valuable records of an agency; the first part designates categories of records that deserve preservation, or those functions and activities for which the documentation should be preserved; and the second part, the location and titles of particular series or segments of series in which the documentation or categories can be found.

Records Series – Consists of records accumulated over a period of time and arranged in an organized file or set of files which can be described, handled, and disposed of as a unit. A record series may consist of records of a single type or format, or of records kept together because they relate to a particular subject, or result from one activity. The physical form of records in a series may vary: paper; film, or other media (including computer storage); volumes, folders, reels, etc., being used at different times. The filing arrangement may be chronological, alphabetic, numeric, coded, or any combination of filing arrangements. A series may, at a particular time, consist of a single folder, or of hundreds of feet of files. Each record series must be specifically defined and include only records with the same retention period.

Retention Period – A retention period is calculated from the date the public record was created.

Schedule – A document governing, on a continuing basis, the retention and disposition of the recurring records series of an organization or agency. Sometimes referred to as records schedule, a records control schedule, a retention schedule, a disposal schedule, a records retention schedule, and a comprehensive records schedule.

Series – File units or documents arranged according to a filing system or kept together because they relate to a particular subject or function, result from the same activity, document a specific kind of transaction, take a particular physical form, or have some other relationship arising out of their creation, receipt, or use, such as restrictions on access and use. Also called a record series.

Specific Authorization – This is the legal authority to destroy records which are no longer created, or to destroy records through a particular date or under a particular condition.

State Agency -- This means any state officer, department, board, commission, institution, or court created by the Constitution or statutes of this state. It does not include the legislative assembly or its committees, officers and employees.

Transfer – Movement of records, usually from a government agency to a records center, for storage, service, and protection.

Transitory Records – Records having only transitory value. These include original and informational copies of documents that do not contain procedural or policy matter applicable to the receiving office, that do not require action by the receiving office, that involve a routine transaction, or that do not contain information of continuing reference value.

Vital Records – Records essential to the continued functioning or reconstruction of an organization during and after an emergency and also those records, essential to protecting the rights and interests of that organization and of the individuals directly affected by its activities. Sometimes called essential records. Include emergency-operating records. It is recommended that these be duplicates or extra copies be located off-site.

Working Papers – Documents such as rough notes, calculations or drafts assembled or created and used in the preparation or analysis of other documents.

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APPENDIX 'C'

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- City of Salem, OR
- The American Archivist

CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

APPENDIX 'D'

OREGON ADMINISTRATIVE RULES (OAR)

Division 30 Records Management Procedures

General 166-30-005

These regulations prescribe procedures for obtaining lawful authority to destroy or otherwise dispose of public records. They specify appropriate methods for destruction of public records. They apply to all public records, regardless of medium or physical format, created and stored by state and local agencies.

Appointment of Records Officer 166-30-016

To establish a records management program to insure orderly retention and destruction of all public records, and to insure the preservation of public records of value, each state or local agency should designate a Records Officer to organize and coordinate records scheduling, retirement, storage, and destruction. The State Archivist will provide training and assistance for Records Officers.

Inventory and Appraisal (State Agencies) 166-30-021

To insure accurate identification and evaluation of its records, each state agency shall, with the advice and assistance of the State Archivist, prepare an inventory of the records of each of its organizational units, including the records of any other agency in its custody. Records which may be found on the State Agency General Records Retention Schedule, OAR chapter 166, Division 200, shall not be included on this inventory. These inventories shall be used to prepare a Special Schedule (OAR 166-30-026) for public records in agency custody, regardless of medium or physical format.

Public Records Retention and Disposition Authorization (Local Agencies) 166-30-027

Authorization for destruction of public records by local agencies must be obtained as follows:

(1) No authorization is required to destroy materials which are excluded or exempt by statute from the definition of public records. (ORS 192.005(5), 192.170)

(2) An applicable General Schedule published in OAR Chapter 166, or a Special Schedule approved by the State Archivist, establishes the appropriate retention and disposition for local agency records. A local agency may destroy public records which have met the terms and conditions of their scheduled retention period, subject to the prior audit requirements of OAR 166-30-041 and any suspension ordered under the provisions of OAR 166-30-045. Unless otherwise stated, a retention period shall be calculated from the date the public record was created.

(3) Notwithstanding any retention period listed in a General Schedule, no public record created in or prior to 1920 shall be destroyed without the express written permission of the State Archivist.

(4) Specific approval from the State Archivist by means of a Special Schedule is required to dispose of public records which are not listed in an applicable General Schedule found in these rules. Instructions on creating Special Schedules are available from the State Archivist.

(5) A Special Schedule approved for an individual local agency shall supersede an applicable General Schedule, insofar as it applies to the same public record.

(6) Special Schedules approved after January 1, 1987, shall have an expiration date set by the State Archivist.

(7) Notwithstanding any retention period listed in a General Schedule or a Special Schedule, no public record listed on the Oregon Historical Records Inventory shall be destroyed. Copies of lists of records on the Oregon Historical Records Inventory are available form the State Archivist.

Prior Audit of Fiscal Public Records Required 166-30-041

Public records of fiscal transactions, regardless of medium or physical format, may not be destroyed until the minimum retention period has passed and the person charged with their audit has released them for destruction. If federal funds are involved, requirements of the United States government shall be observed.

Suspension of Scheduled Public Records Destruction 166-30-045

A scheduled destruction of records, regardless of medium or physical format, which are the subject of a public records request shall be suspended until the request has been resolved. Only those records which have been specifically requested need be retained.

Public Records Disposition and Destruction (State and Local Agencies) 166-30-060

A Special Schedule approved by the State Archivist, or an applicable General Schedule published in these rules, authorizes disposition of public records. Disposition includes:

(1) Transfer to the custody of the State Archivist. When the scheduled retention specifies transfer to the State Archives, an agency shall transfer its custody of the specified records to the custody of the State Archivist.

(2) Shredding, Pulping, or Incineration. Public Records which are confidential by law and negotiable instruments (even when canceled or satisfied in writing) must be destroyed by shredding, pulping, or incineration. The destruction should be supervised and witnessed by a responsible employee of the agency. When using a contractor to destroy public records, the state or local agency must require posting of a bond of undertaking by the contractor to indemnify the state or local agency against any claims or actions resulting from his failure to protect the confidentiality of the public records, and must require a provision precluding sale, transfer, or delivery of the public records to a third party prior to data obliteration. The agreement shall also include provisions requiring secure transit to and handling by the contractor; and prompt processing of the public records by the contractor to fully obliterate the data they contain by shredding, pulping, or incineration.

(3) Recycling. Records which are not confidential by law may be sold or traded for recycling of the fiber or chemical they contain, provided that the sale or trade agreement includes provisions to insure that the public records are promptly converted into a form which precludes use of the information they contain.

(4) Deposit in a Library, Museum, or Historical Society with the permission of the State Archivist. The originals of public records which have been microfilmed in compliance with ORS 192.040 to 192.070 and OAR 166-30-070, and other public records which have continuing local historical value although destruction is authorized, may be deposited in a Library, Museum, or Historical Society if disclosure of the record is not prohibited by law and the depository agrees to comply with ORS 162.305, 192.420, and 192.430. Agreements for such deposits must stipulate that the depository cannot sell or otherwise dispose of the records except by lawful and complete destruction or by returning them to the depositing agency. Permission of the State Archivist is required prior to the transfer of records.

Microfilming 166-30-070

Microfilming may be substituted for any paper or machine readable records if it is made according to the following conditions:

(1) A security copy of microfilm of public record which have a required minimum retention period of 100 years or longer must be made and stored in

accordance with OAR 166-25-005 to 166-25-030. A security copy must be reserved and used solely as a backup security copy or as a master for making working copy duplicate film when required.

(2) Working copies of microfilm, and microfilm of public records with a minimum retention of less than 100 years, may be made in accordance with agency standards and requirements for the retention of the public records, including the option of using any film, processing system, or storage containers the agency may select.

CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT MANUAL

APPENDIX 'E'

SAMPLE FORMS

SAMPLE

Certification of Public Record
Of the City of (name of city), Oregon

I, (city recorder's name), hereby certify that I am the duly appointed, qualified, and acting City Recorder of the City of (name of city), Oregon, and

I further certify that the attached photocopy of (describe document: title numbers, dates) is a true and correct copy of said (type of document).

Witness my hand and the Seal of the City of (name of city), Oregon, this ____ day of __________, ________.

(Impress City Seal over signature.)

____
City Recorder*

*A Deputy Recorder may be authorized to certify as well.

SAMPLE

CERTIFICATION OF PUBLIC RECORD OF THE CITY OF (name of city), OREGON

I, (name of employee), certify and say that the attached photocopy is a correct, true and exact copy of an official public record of the City of (name of city), Oregon, and that the record copy thereof is in my official care, custody and control in my capacity as set forth below my signature.

Signature: ______________________________

Title: ______________________________

Department: ______________________________

ATTEST

I, (city recorder's name*), hereby certify and attest that I am the duly appointed and acting City Recorder of the City of (name of city); and that the person whose signature is affixed above is, in fact, an officer or employee of the City of (name of city), Oregon, acting in the capacity set forth below such signature; and that such signature is genuine.

Witness my hand and the Seal of the City of (name of city), Oregon, this ____ day of _______, 1999.

(Impress city seal over signature.)

____

City Recorder

*A Deputy Recorder may be authorized to certify as well.

SAMPLE POLICY

City of _________
Retention Scheduling and Destruction
Effective Date: ________

I. POLICY

The City of _________ will follow the City Records Retention Schedule as transmitted by the Oregon State Archivist and may be updated from time to time.

II. PURPOSE

This policy is intended to provide guidelines to control retention and destruction of City records.

III. PROCEDURES

The Recorder is authorized to have all papers, documents and records received in all city departments maintained and stored to assure an expeditious and orderly filing system. The Recorder is directed to implement records scheduling as allowed by the City Records Retention Schedule following the procedures below.

A. Each department will be responsible for the retention of the “record copy” created or received in their department with the exception of records such as ordinances, resolutions, agreements and purchase orders.

B. It is strongly recommended that the record copy be stamped, in blue ink, “Record Copy”.

C. Transfer to Short-Term Storage: As records are transferred from active storage to inactive storage, but have not met the minimum retention period, the following steps should be followed:

(1) Only one cubic foot boxes will be accepted, unless approved by the Recorder. Two cubic foot boxes will not be accepted.
  a. Only one record series per box, except if series is small, mix series by same retention.
  b. Records should be boxed in annual time frames that reflect the use of the records, i.e. Fiscal or calendar year.
  c. Arrange records in box using the 8 ½ x 11 standard.
  d. Do not store hanging folders or binders in the boxes, they break down the sides of the boxes. Use a rubber band, clip or colored paper to separate the records.
  e. Attached a completed archive label to the outside of the box below the handle.

(2) List records on the Records Transmittal form, two copies to be included in the box and a copy retained by the department.

    a. Records that are of a sequential nature must be listed in full, if there is an exception, the items not included and a reason why they are required.
(3) Deliver the boxes to the permanent records storage facility.
(4) Records will be added to the storage inventory and assigned a box location number. The box location number will be added to the Transmittal form, a copy retained in the box and one copy returned to the department.
(5) Permanent records, or those records having a retention period of over 10 years, may be eligible for microfilming.

D. Transfer to Permanent Storage: As records are transferred from active storage to permanent storage, the following steps will be followed:

(1) Only one cubic foot boxes will be accepted, unless approved by the Recorder. Two cubic foot boxes will not be accepted.
    a. Only one record series per box, except if series is small, mix series by same retention.
    b. Records should be boxed in annual time frames that reflect the use of the records, i.e. Fiscal or calendar year.
    c. Arrange records in box using the 8 ½ x 11 standard.
    d. Do not store hanging folders or binders in the boxes; they break down the sides of the boxes. Use a rubber band, clip or colored paper to separate the records.
    e. Attached a completed PERMANENT archive label to the outside of the box below the handle.
(2) List records on the Records Transmittal form, two copies to be included in the box and a copy retained by the department.
    a. Records that are of a sequential nature must be listed in full, if there is an exception, the items not included and a reason why they are required.
(3) Deliver the boxes to the permanent records storage facility.
(4) Records will be added to the storage inventory and assigned a box location number. The box location number will be added to the Transmittal form, a copy retained in the box and one copy returned to the department.
(5) Permanent records, or those records having a retention period of over 10 years, may be eligible for microfilming.
(6) Generally, records will be destroyed after meeting the minimum retention. If a record is determined to have substantial value, the record may be retained beyond the minimum retention upon approval of the department head, City Manager, City Attorney and City Recorder.
(7) Destruction: Once a record has served its purpose and has met the minimum retention, it is ready for final disposition using the following process:

a. If the records are not in a records storage facility, the department will complete the Records Transmittal form.
b. The department head will sign the form and forward it to the Recorder.
c. The Recorder shall complete a form entitled "Certificate of Records Authorized to the Destroyed" which includes the following statement: "*I hereby certify that the above records have been destroyed by ______ this ___ day of ___, 19__.*" Signed by the City Recorder.
d. The Certificate shall be signed by the City Manager, the City Attorney, the Mayor, the department head and the Recorder.
e. After approval, the records shall be destroyed by an appropriate method.
f. After the records have been destroyed, the Recorder will sign and file the Certificate.

SAMPLE

RECORDS TRANSMITTAL
CITY RECORDERS OFFICE **ARCHIVE BOX NO. _________**

TO: RECORDS MANAGEMENT

FROM: (NAME) ___________________ DEPARTMENT ____________________
DATE: ____________

LIST ONLY ONE RECORD PER TRANSMITTAL

RECORD SERIES: _______________

RECORD DESCRIPTION: ________________

RECORD DESCRIPTION	DATE(S) OF RECORDS

I certify the records transmitted herein for retention by Records Management are complete and accurate as transmitted.

Record Coordinator Signature: ________________________________
Date: __________

Accepted by Records Management: Retention _____________ years

______________________________ Recycle/Shred

BOX NO:

ARCHIVES

RECORD SERIES NO: ________________________

CONTENTS:

RETENTION: _________
DESTROY: ____________

DEPARTMENT:__________________________

SAMPLE FORM

Note: Please type or print. Attach a copy of the record, inventory sheet, or microfilm form

RECORDS DESTRUCTION REQUEST

SECTION 1. REQUEST: (Dept. Records Supervisor)

Series Title

____

Schedule # ________________________ **Minimum Retention Period** ________________

Brief Description of Record Series:

____

Inclusive Dates:

____

Records: On Microform – Job # ____ **Film Date** _______ **Verified** ___________

Paper files – Cubic Feet ________ **Current Storage Location** ______________________

Dept. Records Supervisor:

_________________________ _________________________

Signature **Date**

Dept. _____________ **Division** __________________

Phone Ext. # ______________

SECTION 2. ELIGIBLE FOR DESTRUCTION. (City Recorder's Office)

Records Manager: ______________________________ ______________

Signature **Date**

SECTION 3. DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL

Director's Signature: ____________________________________ _______________

Date

SECTION 4. CERTIFICATE OF DESTRUCTION

Destroyed by: _____________________________________ _______________

Date

Title ___________________________ **Dept.** _____________________

Describe Destruction Method

____

(shred, recycle, other)

Original: City Recorder/Records Manager **Copy: Department**